

Pretoria's  
sanctions-  
busting

PAGE 12

# IN THESE TIMES

VOL. 12, NO. 34

SEPT. 7-13, 1988

\$1.25

## Fake the Nation

In the  
image  
war,  
Bush  
leads  
Duke.

Pages  
2 & 3

**Being there in Burma**

A country in fast-forward

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**Beauty is the beast**

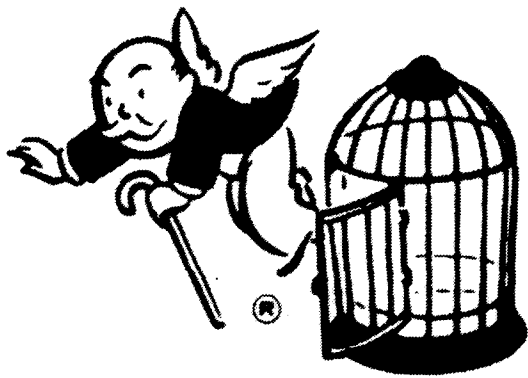
Buns of steel; pageants unreal

PAGES 18 & 19

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GET OUT  
OF JAIL, FREE



COMPLIMENTS OF MICHAEL DUKAKIS  
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1988 CRNC

## Bush hits Duke with a furlough blow

By David Moberg

"I'm the one who says it's a scandal to give a weekend furlough to a hardened killer who hasn't served enough time to be eligible for parole," George Bush declared in his nomination acceptance speech. If anyone didn't grasp Bush's suggestion that Michael Dukakis favored unleashing criminal hordes upon upstanding citizens, a week later he made it more explicit. Dukakis, Bush claimed, "fought tooth and nail to keep that outrageous furlough program that lets murderers, rapists and drug dealers out on appeal [sic]."

Bush's repeated hammering with vague but hysterical references to the Massachusetts furlough program might suggest he got confused and thinks he's running against Dukakis for county prosecutor. But Republican strategists know that the accusation of being "soft on crime" hits emotional hot buttons. And some, like Republican consultant Eddie Mahe, are convinced that Bush can only win in November by waging a tough negative campaign.

The furlough issue, one of Bush's key negative assaults, reveals how dirty and distorted the vice president's campaign already is.

**The Horton case:** The issue arose in Massachusetts when the conservative *Lawrence Eagle-Tribune* seized on the case of Willie Horton, a 36-year-old black man from Lawrence who was convicted in 1975 of murdering Joseph Fournier, a young gas station attendant, then stuffing his

body in a garbage can. Horton was convicted of first-degree murder and sentenced to life without parole. Although many people think such a sentence means the convict will never step outside prison, in practice it has long meant that prisoners who behave well may eventually become eligible for commutation of their sentences.

Under a 1972 Massachusetts law embraced since then by Republican and Democratic governors, both conservative and liberal, all prisoners in recent years have been eligible for some form of furlough or temporary leave from prison. In some cases that has meant nothing more than going to the funeral of a close relative in the company of security guards. But in most instances it has meant leaving prison for a day or two in the custody of a sponsor, for pre-arranged purposes and with regular reports to prison authorities, including being available for spot checks.

Over the years the administration of the program was tightened, and prisoners serving life sentences became eligible to be considered for furlough only after serving 10 years and being transferred from walled, high-security prisons. After Horton had served his first 10 years and was shifted from a maximum-security prison, he received nine weekend furloughs that were uneventful. On June 12, 1986, during his 10th furlough, Horton—released to his sponsor to shop, to go to church and a movie and to visit his daughter—failed to make one of his calls to prison officials. He had escaped.

Horton was caught the following April in Maryland. There he had broken into the home of a young, white Maryland couple, binding and slashing the man, then raping the woman twice.

The *Eagle-Tribune's* sensationalist, hysterical series of editorials and reports repeatedly described Horton as a sex offender, graphically describing the mutilation of Fournier, and only much later noted deep in one story that Fournier's body showed no lacerations below the waist. During May, June and July 1987 the *Eagle-Tribune* wrote 15 times that rape victim Angela Barnes was pregnant; then in August of last year the paper offhandedly corrected its error. The paper also failed to describe thoroughly the furlough program and its consequences, mistakenly referred to the furloughs as "unsupervised weekend passes" and portrayed the population of prisoners serving life without parole as "cold-blooded killers," suggesting inaccurately that everyone serving that sentence was a Willie Horton clone.

It was bad enough that such inaccurate, distorted reporting won the paper a Pulitzer prize. But compared with the way the Bush campaign is handling the issue, the *Eagle-Tribune* was restrained.

**Furlough benefits:** Furlough or temporary leave programs have existed for many decades, and now all states and the federal prison system have some form of prisoner furlough. Even in liberal Massachusetts, the current law—in a much more lenient form—was passed on a Republi-

can governor's initiative. According to the professional journal *Corrections Compendium*, 33 states—approximately half with Republican governors—currently allow criminals sentenced to life imprisonment out for community release under some conditions. In Massachusetts the rate of escapes—defined stringently as not returning or not checking in within two hours after the inmate's deadline—was low at the start, 1.9 percent. (Roughly one-third of the "escapees" were technical violations, that is, returning or checking in but doing so more than two hours late.) As the program was tightened and the number of furloughs granted dropped by 12 percent in 1986 (despite a near tripling of the prison population), the escape rate fell to 0.2 percent.

During the entire program only 11 lifers escaped, all but three in the first three years. Eight of those actually returned but were more than two hours late. In recent years the escape rate for lifers has been 0.05 percent.

Why do prison systems let people like Willie Horton out on furlough? First, most prisoners serving life without parole and getting furloughs aren't like Horton. They tend to be people who killed acquaintances in a moment of passion or drunkenness. In Massachusetts, as in many states, someone can be convicted of felony murder and receive a life sentence for driving a getaway car in a robbery in which someone was killed.

"A lot of these people [serving life sentences] are not permanently dangerous, not people we need to fear in the community," argues Jon Larivee, executive director of the Boston-based Crime and Justice Foundation.

Furloughs help officials manage the prison system, giving incentives for good behavior in prison and permit-

## INSIDE STORY

ting them to make distinctions among prisoners. It helps them decide which prisoners do well enough outside to warrant parole or commutation.

**Fighting crime:** The strongest argument may be that society gains. The furlough system gives prisoners hope and contacts with family and the outside world that permit better reintegration when they are released.

"Even if you don't care about inmates, [the furlough program] is a crime-fighter," Larivee said. "If you want to talk about fighting crime, then one of the ways is furloughs." In 1984, 12 percent of the inmates who participated in the Massachusetts furlough program committed crimes after they were released, but 31 percent of those who had not participated were convicted of crimes after getting out of prison. The difference is not just a reflection of a process by which the less dangerous people get furloughs. Statistical analyses of the prison population strongly suggest that the furlough system itself is a cause of the lower recidivism rate.

The risk of the Willie Horton incident has to be measured against the success in preventing hundreds of such crimes by having a furlough program. Only after the fact is it easy to say Horton's release was a mistake. But every aspect of the criminal justice system weighs risks of crime against other human rights. Society insists that people be found guilty beyond reasonable doubt, for example, even though this standard for protecting innocent people from imprisonment means some people who are actually guilty go free.

"What concerns me is here's a good program with benefits to the inmates, to society, to the corrections system," Larivee said. "It is being lambasted for political gain. I guess that's what presidential politics is about. But this is a complex business, and there aren't a lot of successes, not a lot of effective tools. When we identify them, instead of throwing them out for their failures, we should improve them."

But it's winning elections, not fighting crime, that interests George Bush. And if it takes demagogic, distorted appeals that actually threaten the public safety to win, so be it.

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(ISSN 0160-5992)

Published 41 times a year: weekly except the first week of January, first week of March, last week of November, last week of December; bi-weekly in June through the first week in September by Institute for Public Affairs, 1300 W. Belmont, Chicago, IL 60657, (312) 472-5700. The entire contents of *In These Times* are copyright © 1988 by Institute for Public Affairs, and may not be reproduced in any manner, either in whole or in part, without permission of the publisher. Second-class postage paid at Chicago, IL, and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to *In These Times*, 1912 Debs Ave., Mt. Morris, IL 61054. This issue (Vol. 12, No. 34) published Sept. 7, 1988, for newsstand sales Sept. 7-13, 1988.



By John B. Judis

WASHINGTON, D.C.

**T**HERE'S NOTHING DISTURBING OR SURPRISING about Vice President George Bush's lead in the opinion polls over Gov. Michael Dukakis. At this point polls reflect name-recognition and the fleeting impression of yesterday's news.

What is disturbing is the circumstances that surround Bush's lead. In spite of having chosen a nincompoop as vice president, Bush is not only leading in the polls but is dominating the political debate, putting Dukakis on the defensive. And Dukakis is not doing anything about it—or anything remotely effective. He spent last week touring Massachusetts—hardly a battleground state for 1988—and uttering solemn pronouncements about drug dealers, the deficit and the Iran-contra scandal.

Dukakis wants to run the same campaign against Bush that he ran against former Massachusetts Gov. Ed King in 1982 or against his Democratic primary opponents. In these campaigns Dukakis could rely on his opponents' dubious reputations, narrow political appeal or propensity to goof up. All he had to do was avoid making mistakes himself.

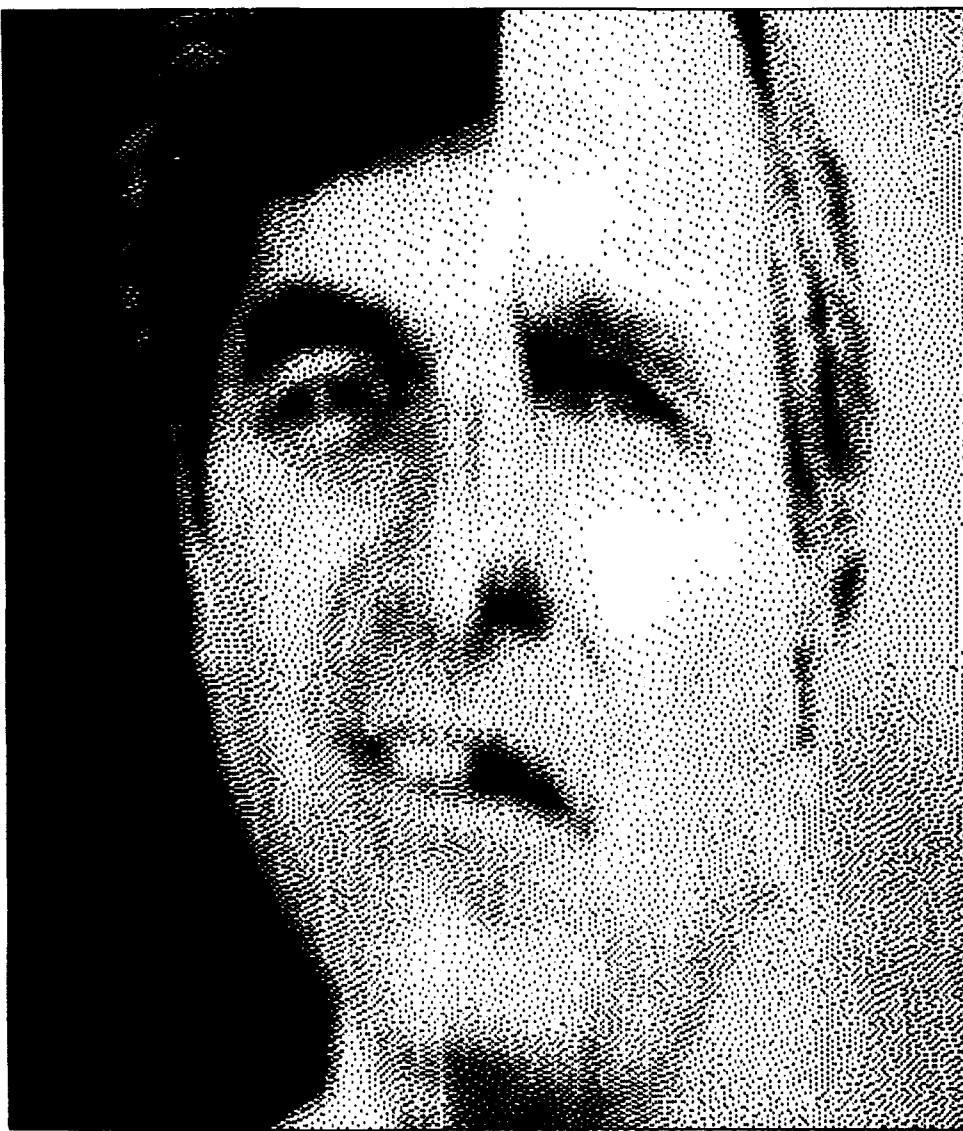
But Bush is not going to allow Dukakis to re-run his old campaigns. Bush's managers, many of whom are veterans of two successful presidential campaigns, understand how presidential campaigns work. Dukakis and his handlers, many of them out of the ill-starred Mondale campaign, do not appear to.

**Images, not issues:** What is striking about the 1988 election is what it is not about. There is no burning issue—the economy is not in recession and war is not in the offing—and there is no incumbent candidate who must defend his record in office. This accentuates the tendency of voters to base their final decision on their images of the candidates.

These images—which are created by TV advertising and public appearances—don't necessarily correspond closely to the candidates themselves. What voters see is a collection of images superimposed on each other—the way cartoon characters are sometimes created. For instance, in 1984 the Reagan campaign succeeded in casting Mondale as a composite of Jimmy Carter and George McGovern—two candidates with negative images—and Reagan as football hero George Gipp, Clint Eastwood's "Dirty Harry," Franklin Roosevelt and Dwight Eisenhower.

The images are themselves products of political history and realignment. During the last half-century parties and candidates have vied to depict themselves as strong and representative of the average American and to brand their opposition as weak elitists or economic royalists. From 1932 through 1964 the Democrats were able to create a populist image of their party and candidates, but after 1964 the Republicans turned the tables.

The Republican attempt to subvert the Democrats' populist rhetoric really began in 1950, when right-wing Republicans, led by then-Wisconsin Sen. Joseph McCarthy, began to depict Democrats as effete, even effeminate elitists. Being willing to negotiate with the Soviet Union was equated with being "pink" or soft. In 1952 the Democrats unwittingly reinforced this image by nominating "egghead" Adlai Stevenson, but both John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson successfully repelled these kinds of attacks.



## Duke's doldrums: Bush takes the offensive in the image wars

The trouble began after the 1964 election.

George Wallace, Ronald Reagan and Richard Nixon turned the Democrats' image upside down. Taking advantage of the divisions created among Democrats by the civil rights movement, the Vietnam War and the '60s counterculture, they portrayed their Democratic opponents as "elitist snobs" who displayed an ideological affinity for long-haired flag-burners and bra-burners and a patronizing concern for the plight of ghetto blacks, while harboring contempt for working-class whites, who were being victimized by growing crime, higher taxes and decaying school systems.

In 1976 Carter tried to counteract this image by running as a "populist" against incumbent Gerald Ford. But Carter's failure as

**Television images don't often correspond closely to the candidates themselves. What voters see is superimposed images, reminiscent of cartoons.**

a president to stem inflation and Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini further reinforced an image of Democratic elitism and weakness. In 1984 former U.N. Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick successfully portrayed Mondale and Ferraro as "San Francisco Democrats"—a phrase meant to link Democratic foreign and economic policy to San Francisco's gay culture.

On the basis of this imagery, Republicans won away the Southern whites and Northern ethnics who had traditionally voted Democratic. By portraying the Democrats as weak and ineffectual, they also attracted a new generation of voters—most evident in the 1984 election.

**"Limp-wristed" Dukakis:** Bush's campaign is based on portraying Dukakis as a Stevenson-McGovern-Carter-Mondale Democrat. Although he and his handlers know that Dukakis doesn't fit the image, they are determined to dredge up any action and trait that associates Dukakis with it. As a result, Bush's campaign already vies for the title of "the most cynical ever run."

Bush and his minions have already made an issue of Dukakis' furlough of convicted felons (see story page 2), his 1978 veto of a bill requiring Massachusetts teachers to lead the pledge of allegiance, his support for abortion rights and gun control, his support for a tax cut as a "last resort," his membership in the American Civil Liberties Union, his opposition to school prayer, his fabricated mental instability and even his shortness.

Some political analysts have argued that this kind of approach won't work as well this year as it did in the last two elections. Bush and his multimillionaire running mate will have more trouble than Nixon or Reagan in insinuating that their opponents are "elitists." As Kevin Phillips writes in the current *American Political Report*, "Yesteryear's old coalition dynamics" of race, patriotism, anti-government populism and culture "are fading as of the late '80s." And the Democrats have veered away from the party of "acid, amnesty and abortion" that Nixon pilloried in 1972.

The images tied to reality have frayed. This is reflected in the tawdry spectacle of the Bush campaign dredging up decade-old incidents and stray comments about Dukakis. But while antigovernment sentiment and the appeal of the antiabortion forces are considerably reduced, race and patriotism still resonate among voters. They also remain concerned about strength and weakness, evidenced in passing comments about the "limp-wristed Dukakis." Whether these sentiments can destroy Dukakis as they did Mondale is unclear; but unless counteracted, they can make it very difficult for him to win.

**Defeating Bush:** In the coming weeks Dukakis could banish the image of Democrats as effete elitists by turning the image game against his opponent. If Dukakis wants to figure out how, he should look carefully at the way Sen. Robert Dole beat Bush and Rep. Richard Gephardt beat Dukakis in last February's Iowa caucuses: they won by evoking populist themes and imagery.

Bush's image of being a wimp stemmed largely from his association with an upper-class stereotype rather than from anything in particular he had done. Dukakis can recall that imagery not by impugning Bush's manhood, but rather by emphasizing how the privileges of class have affected his view of ordinary Americans. Dukakis should make a major issue of Bush's proposal to reduce the capital gains tax by 15 percent—a tax cut that will benefit only the wealthy and that will probably require tax increases on the middle class. He should hammer at Bush's choice of an unqualified rich kid as his running mate, who led the Senate campaign against the plant-closing bill. Dukakis should constantly pose this question to voters: "Do these upper-class men who never had to work for a living really care about you?"

Once he has established these images of selfish patricians, Dukakis can emphasize his own immigrant background. And he can also begin to talk to the many Americans anxious about their economic future. He can ask, "Will George Bush make sure your children can go to college and own their own home—or will he and his running mate worry more about Wall Street speculators getting theirs?"

Dukakis' current choice of issues and themes is at best ineffective, at worst self-destructive. If he were running against Ed King rather than George Bush, competence would be a major issue. If he were running as a Republican in Kansas, deficits would be a major issue. But in general Americans don't base their presidential vote on the federal deficit. Drugs are not a good Democratic issue, either. Americans are concerned about the drug culture—something associated with the Democratic image—not with some backroom links between Bush and Panamanian dictator Manuel Antonio Noriega. And the Iran-contra scandal is not a cutting-edge issue with Reagan Democrats.

The problem is that Dukakis clearly doesn't like to make populist appeals. He has never displayed any resentment toward the rich, and his politics have been based on conciliation between classes rather than polarization. He also senses the deep cynicism that has afflicted American politics, and he doesn't want to contribute to it.

But American politics, once a game of parties and patronage, is now a contest of images. Dukakis is going to have to play whether he likes it or not. The question is whether he will do what is necessary to win. □



By Joel Bleifuss

## Evacuate

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has offered "temporary evacuation and relocation" to four Jacksonville, Ark., families in whose yards the agency detected high levels of dioxin, the deadliest human-made substance. Dick Russell reports that the families live in a residential neighborhood south of the now-closed Vertac Chemical plant in Jacksonville. (The hushed-up dioxin contamination of Jacksonville was the subject of a three-part investigation earlier this year by *In These Times*, March 9, 16 and 23.) The EPA findings may be just the tip of the iceberg. The EPA has set an "action level" (the level at which the agency takes action) on dioxin of one part per billion (ppb). The average level of dioxin found at these four homes was four ppb. One yard had a soil reading of 11 ppb, with an 80 ppb finding in a ditch behind the house. Most of the properties near the chemical plant, where 25 percent of the Agent Orange used in Vietnam was manufactured, have yet to be tested. And an article by Bobbi Ridlehoover of the *Little Rock Democrat* indicates that the EPA is continuing to downplay the problem. Resident Debbie Hodges, informed by the EPA of her yard's dioxin problem, told Ridlehoover: "They say it's not bad. They said one part per billion is below normal.... They explained how Times Beach, Mo., and Love Canal, N.Y. [the dioxin-contaminated sites evacuated by the EPA] had 100, 200, 300 to 500 parts per billion. They also explained how you would have to stand out there and inhale the dust for years and years to get cancer." Lois Gibbs, head of the Citizens Clearinghouse for Hazardous Waste and the woman who brought national attention to Love Canal, insists that of the 2,149 soil samples taken at Love Canal only one sample had dioxin above one ppb. She pointed out that the federal government used the one ppb action level to evacuate Times Beach. Contacted by *In These Times*, Gibbs added: "It's interesting that this is following the exact same pattern as Love Canal. At first they said the poisoning was affecting a limited amount of people and only pregnant women and children under two should leave temporarily. Then, under pressure, we soon got it up to 239 homes [evacuated]." Patty Frase, the Arkansas grassroots leader who forced the EPA to do the testing around the Vertac site, notes that the latest dioxin findings have occurred in two different neighborhoods. "Everybody around that plant needs to be permanently relocated," said Frase. "The EPA needs to buy out the area and fence it off. We're talking about 300 homes, minimum. This is only the beginning."

## The scandal that time forgot

The October *Playboy* has been on the stands now for about a week, and so far the major media outlets have ignored a story by Abbie Hoffman and Jonathan Silvers that details allegations of a pre-election arms-for-hostages deal between the 1980 Reagan-Bush campaign and the Iranian government. Hoffman and Silvers present evidence (as *In These Times* reported on June 24, 1987) that the 1980 Reagan-Bush campaign agreed to send weapons and military spare parts to Iran if Iran agreed to hold the hostages until after the 1980 election, thus ensuring President Carter's defeat.

**Herd instinct:** When Jessica Hahn, one-time paramour of TV evangelist Jim Bakker, bared all for *Playboy* it made the national news. But so far, the arms-for-hostages story has been ignored. Why? That question was put by *In These Times* to representatives of the major news organizations. Spokesmen for ABC, CBS and NBC evening news shows said that as far as they knew their news programs had no plans to cover the story. None of the spokesmen had even heard of the alleged deal. None expressed any interest in hearing more about it. A spokeswoman for ABC's *Nightline* said that, as of now, Ted Koppel had no plans to cover the story. Queries on the story to the *New York Times* national desk brought the repeated response, "I'll have someone get back to you." We're still waiting. An editor at National Public Radio's *All Things Considered* expressed interest and was familiar with the allegations. She said, "We might [cover the story], but I really don't know right now." Finally, demonstrating that it's the herd instinct that guides media discourse, a spokeswoman for the Public Broadcasting Service's *Washington Week in Review* explained: "If it is a news topic, we'll probably cover it as soon as it comes up in the news." The only positive response came from Cable News Network's TV talkshow *Larry King Live*. A spokeswoman



TV "shock show" host Morton Downey Jr. grabs writer Paul Bass.

## Bloodsport with Mort

NEW HAVEN, CONN.—It was the old one-two punch: fake left, blindside your opponent from the right, with a hall full of supporters out for blood.

That's the secret behind Morton Downey Jr.'s talk-show schtick. I got first-hand insight into his tactics one recent evening when I was an invited guest on the panel of a talk show he presented at the Palace Performing Arts Center in New Haven. He physically assaulted me in front of a roaring mob of 2,000 groupies.

Downey, in case you've been asleep in the age of cable TV, has become a national celebrity for his syndicated nightly talk show. So much of a celebrity that he now brings the show on the road on weekends to places like the Palace.

He threw me and the other guests off-guard the moment he entered the dressing room before that Sunday night's performance—with his charm.

All smiles, he assured us, "When you hear my views you'll find out I'm not the raving conservative everybody says I am." He then launched into a defense of nuclear power and an attack on South African black leaders. Quite congenial, he slapped guest panelist Mary Ellen Marucci five. Later, on stage, he would berate her for being on welfare.

None of us expected *PM Magazine*-style fawning onstage, of course, but Downey certainly didn't seem like a guy looking for a brawl.

He gave us a revealing bit of coaching, though: "Remember who's out there. They're 18 to 26. We've got to find things to excite and incite them."

The moment the lights went up onstage, I saw what he meant by "incite." He sped about like a random bullet, his face consumed with rage. He ridiculed panelist Jim Motavalli, editor of the *Fairfield Advocate*, insinuating he was gay.

Then he started in earnest, baiting us with insults, cutting off our comments, roaring the stage and whipping up an applause so deafening that we were unable to hear him.

I had expected lewdness, crudeness, insults, knowing that Downey controlled the mike. But I was unprepared for the disadvantage of not being able to hear his taunts, or for the feeling of having 2,000 fanatics on testosterone overload joining in his attacks.

I was especially unprepared for his physical assault. We were "discussing" whether his TV show in fact represents, as he claims, the "voice of the people." Is it just coincidence, I asked, remembering his offstage advice, that you cram your studio with 18-to-26-year-old white males?

He didn't like that—especially because he had no rational answer.

So he approached me, stuck his cigarette an inch or two from my face. Towering over me (he stood, I sat), he glared, striking a macho pose. Then he offered this witty comeback: "Your eyes are fucking blind."

Frightened, I asked him to remove

the cigarette from my face. So he moved it closer. "Kiss my butt," he sneered. He started in with the threatening gestures.

Terrified, I threw up my hands in self-defense and spat at the lit cigarette now practically touching my face. Then he struck me in the chest, ripped my shirt, cut my chest, lifted me from my seat. Fortunately, Motavalli, an old friend, leaped to my defense, pulling this lunatic off me. As I left, the audience chanted, "Kill, kill, kill!"

At first I resisted the notion of pressing assault charges. Hadn't I asked for it by going on the show?

No, I hadn't. I was playing the victim, blaming myself. It's one thing to argue vociferously, even with odds stacked against you. But I never imagined the guy would slug me. Downey had broken the law and humiliated me. So he should be charged, rather than, as usual, bullying his guests (in most cases homeless people, black people, women, never anyone in a position of power) and getting away with it. No, this wasn't just showbiz.

My hope is that my encounter with Mort—a logical extension of the way he intimidates people rather than respectfully debates them—will demonstrate how his tactics are one step away from inciting a riot. I hope it will convince people that such antics deserve to be reviled, opposed or ignored, not canonized. —Paul Bass

The writer edits the *New Haven Independent*, where a version of this story originally appeared.

## Sandinistas get surveyed

MANAGUA—One of the most frequently asked questions through seven years of the U.S. contra war in Nicaragua has been, "How many people really support the Sandinistas?" A new, independent public opinion poll, the first of its kind done

in Nicaragua since the fall of the Somozas, sheds fascinating light on this and other questions, with both expected and not so expected results.

The poll was taken in early June by the Itztani Research Center, a new private organization linked to the Managua branch of the Jesuit-run Central American University. Since

polling in rural areas where the war goes on is still difficult, the researchers restricted their survey to Managua, the capital, where 1,129 respondents voiced their opinions on a variety of often sensitive questions.

The touchiest question politically was, "With which political party do you identify?" For died-in-the-wool Sandinista party members, the an-



swers were chastening. "None," replied 60 percent of those polled. Only 28 percent said "FSLN" (Sandinistas). And all the opposition parties together received a scant 9 percent.

Was the ruling party upset by the 28 percent figure? Rafael Solis, first secretary of Nicaragua's National Assembly and a leading Sandinista spokesman, is unperturbed. "Only the 'triumphalists' are going to be surprised by this," he says, referring to some of his more dogmatic comrades. "Personally, I think the poll findings are quite objective."

Taken as a whole, the results reflect a mixed bag of approval and disapproval for the Sandinistas. Asked to evaluate the government's "political performance"—the question that most approximated overall approval/disapproval—27 percent gave the Sandinistas a good or excellent rating, 41 percent said average and 26 percent, poor or very poor. President Daniel Ortega fared considerably better than the government he heads, receiving good or excellent marks from 42 percent, an average rating from 29 percent and poor or very poor from 21 percent. As expected, those most likely to rate the Sandinistas highly were young people and the educated, while workers were divided and the merchant sector hostile.

Most worrisome for the Sandinistas were people's ratings of the government's economic management: 22 percent responded good or excellent, 36 percent average and 38 percent poor or very poor. In addition,

reflecting the impact of last February's currency swap and stabilization policies, a full 80 percent reported that their "new córdobas" were buying less than the old ones. Since the economy has long been considered the Sandinistas' Achilles heel, these results surprised no one.

With the data still being analyzed, the question uppermost now is what the results mean in terms of future elections. Over the last few months, Nicaragua's legislature has debated new municipal and electoral laws, thus paving the way for local balloting early in 1989.

Although the polltakers caution that it is difficult to cull electoral predictions out of their data in politically volatile Nicaragua, opposition reactions to the poll's results were rueful. Santos Amador, a spokesman for the Popular Social Christians, admitted that the 9 percent figure identifying with the opposition indicates that most Nicaraguans doubt the other parties' credibility and leadership. With the new electoral law requiring a party to win 5 percent of the vote to gain representation in parliament, Nicaragua's splintered opposition factions will have to patch up their disagreements or face extinction.

Beyond the theme of simple support and opposition, the survey data threw up revealing information about how Nicaraguans view the political system the Sandinistas are constructing. When the pollsters asked whether people thought the Sandinista government was "democratic," 48 percent answered "no" and

only 40 percent "yes." Asked what country in Central America was the "most democratic," 40 percent replied "Costa Rica." Only 23 percent named their own country.

These findings appear to indicate that traditional, liberal notions of democracy are still strongly rooted in the Nicaraguan electorate. "The average Nica thinks Costa Rica is democratic because it has never known dictatorship and has elections every four years," says the FSLN's Solis, who then sidestepped a question about whether the Sandinistas had stumbled in their nine-year attempt to educate Nicaraguans to a different, revolutionary definition of democracy.

The researchers think their results mean that a large minority of Nicaraguans, at least in the capital, believe their government is for some reason illegitimate. A sizeable space in the center of the political spectrum thus exists for opposition of some sort. But to date it is a space none of the existing opposition groupings has been able to fill.

Although the Sandinistas may not enjoy an absolute majority, the poll probably indicates that they will have little trouble triumphing in the upcoming 1989 and 1990 elections. If this conclusion galls the Reagan administration, another of the polls findings will cut to the quick. Queried as to whether they supported military aid to the contras, a resounding 86 percent of respondents said "no," only 9 percent "yes."

—David R. Dye

Hadley, Mass., Red Sun Press of Boston, Omega Press of Philadelphia, Salsedo Press of Chicago and Inkworks of Berkeley, Calif.—met in Cleveland for the first Progressive Printers Conference.

Although technical topics like desktop publishing, accounting and health and safety were on the conference agenda, much of the discussion centered on how to balance political ideals with the financial needs of a small business. Many questions were raised.

For example, how do worker/owners who are uncomfortable with the terms "profit" and "management" raise capital for expansion? Members of Chicago's Salsedo Press discovered that bankers were much more receptive when the collective started referring to itself as a "long-term partnership of dedicated professionals."

Or how many traditional commercial accounts does a print shop need to subsidize political work? And should a shop change its radical-sounding name so as not to scare off commercial accounts? For example, in 1978 the Philadelphia Resistance Print Shop changed its name to Omega press.

How does one decide who gets movement discounts? Inkworks of Berkeley charges full price for commercial clients, less for progressive organizations with a funding base and even less for political groups without regular funding. Northstar

Express of Providence charges everyone the same but then sends a donation check to left-wing clients so that the shop's contribution is not taken for granted.

As the business grows and work becomes more specialized, how does one keep alive the sense of satisfaction one gets from producing a leaflet from start to finish and then distributing it at a demonstration? And what should a collective do when faced with the choice of hiring a skilled person with weak politics or an unskilled radical?

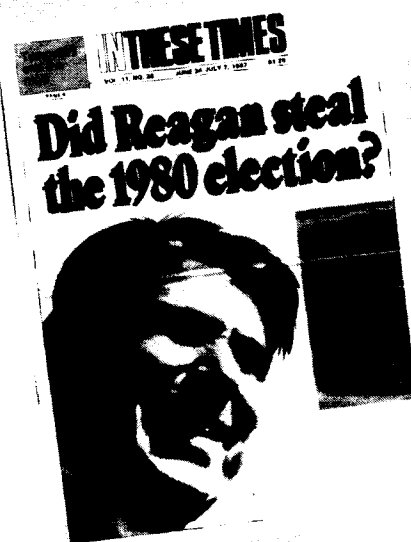
"As we grow we need skills, need to survive as a business in order to serve the movement," said Donna Larrivee-Cohen of Orange Blossom Press. "But we usually end up spending time training a person with good political instincts and hope that we don't go out of business in the meantime."

By striving to do progressive work in democratically managed workplaces, these printers are part of a political tradition that has long characterized printers and typographers. Today, when most news media and publishing companies are controlled by large corporations, these print shops form a small but important network of independent, worker-controlled printing presses.

As press critic A.J. Liebling once wrote, "Freedom of the press belongs to those who own one."

—David Beach

there said it was "very, very likely" that they would devote a program to the scandal. It was during a June 15 appearance on King's radio show that former President Jimmy Carter said: "There were reports made to me before the election that this was going on—that the hostages would not be released [until after the election] and that [the Reagan administration would see to it that] weapons sales would be restored to Iran, either directly or through the Israelis" ("In Short," July 20). King then asked Carter if he would participate in this year's presidential campaign. Carter replied, "If Dukakis calls on me to help clarify a controversial issue where I was personally involved and know that the facts need to be revealed, I'll certainly do that through the media." Good luck, Jimmy.



**An In These Times reader?** Although the media may not be interested in hearing about the alleged arms-for-hostages deal, 1980 Reagan-Bush campaign officials who are alleged to have made the deal have been following reports on the scandal closely. Abbie Hoffman, who co-authored the *Playboy* story, told *In These Times* of a conversation he had with Richard Allen, Reagan's chief foreign policy adviser during the 1980 campaign. (According to both the *Washington Post* and the *Miami Herald*, in early October 1980 Allen and Robert MacFarlane, each of whom would later become Reagan's national security adviser, discussed an arms-for-hostages deal with a man who claimed to represent the Iranian government. Both men have said they dismissed the offer.) Hoffman says that, during a conversation about potential libel suits, Allen and he discussed *In These Times'* original June 24, 1987, cover story of the alleged deal. Allen is reported to have said: "If we wanted to we could have blown *In These Times* right out of history. But why make them famous?" To which *In These Times* Managing Editor Sheryl Larson responds: "Go ahead, Dick, make our 24-hour time period."

**Will Richard Allen be sued?** *In These Times* has learned that some of the American hostages are thinking of suing certain 1980 Reagan-Bush campaign staff members for holding them in Iran an extra 76 days—the time between the 1980 election and their release moments after Ronald Reagan's January 20 inauguration. Noted civil rights attorneys Leonard Weinglass and Leonard Boudin have met with a representative of the hostage group that had in the early '80s brought an unsuccessful suit against the U.S. government. Weinglass told *In These Times*: "We did have a preliminary meeting. The case is under assessment and review. It is being seriously considered. The hostages have a loose-knit organization, but they are in touch with each other, and when this story came out a representative of the group met with us. The suit would be against named individuals acting in a private capacity. These people [who are alleged to have made the deal with Iran] were not then part of the government; they were people acting against the government to keep the hostages in Iran. In this case there would be no question of governmental immunity, so from a legal point of view it is a much more viable suit [than the previous one]." But Weinglass does not know if and when the suit will be brought. The preliminary investigation for such a case would be expensive. The discovery process for the Christic Institute's suit against covert operators Richard Secord, John Singlaub, John Hull, et al. cost nearly \$3 million. Said Weinglass, "We're at a very preliminary stage. Such a suit would require a comprehensive investigation before named individuals are identified. It depends on the hostage group and their intentions, as well as the potential for financing the discovery process."

## Printing for the movement

CLEVELAND—If you need some printing done for a progressive cause here in Cleveland, you'll probably go to Orange Blossom Press. It's the kind of place where they don't look at you funny if you're openly socialist or homosexual. And they'll probably give you advice on how to improve the graphic impact of your leaflets and brochures—perhaps even a discount for movement work.

Orange Blossom opened for business 11 years ago in a ramshackle house on Cleveland's Near West Side. A small, second-hand Multilith 1250 offset press sat in the basement. The darkroom filled a bedroom closet. The two employees were overworked.

Orange Blossom has since become a left institution in Cleveland. Today the shop operates out of its own building on a busy commercial street. It has five presses and gross sales of more than \$700,000 a year. And, while its 11 full-time worker/owners are still overworked, they pay themselves respectable wages.

For years members of Orange Blossom and similar print shop collectives have worked in relative isolation. But this summer they began organizing a network to share information. On July 29-31, members of 14 shops—including Orange Blossom, Common Wealth Printing of



# Koch's homeless solution: blame the victims...

By Daniel Lazare

NEW YORK

**A**T 72ND STREET A BLACK MALE IN HIS 30s enters the subway trains, his dirty T-shirt rolled up to reveal 12 inches of plastic tubing dangling from his bare midriff. "Ladies and gentlemen," he announces, "as you can see I'm one of the homeless, and I'm also on kidney dialysis...." After a brief appeal for help, he hobbles around collecting contributions from a half-dozen riders before moving on to the next car.

• At 42nd Street a light-skinned Hispanic enters flashing a card reading, "I am a deaf mute." He signals his thanks to each person who drops a coin in his cup and then silently moves on.

• Exiting at Christopher Street, riders walk past two destitute men slumped against a wall and, at the top of the stairs, a third man sprawled alongside a pile of empty beer bottles. If the third man doesn't ask for money, it's only because he's either dead or comatose.

**Mean streets:** From London to L.A., many cities have their homeless, but none has them quite like New York. Due to the city's size and density, the down-and-out now seem to be everywhere—an estimated 30,000 to 50,000 people hang out on streetcorners, in the parks, in abandoned buildings or on the subway trains themselves, which the most vigorous and enterprising have turned into a kind of travelling road show of the displaced and dispossessed.

Recently, however, New York has also seen a counteroffensive by Mayor Ed Koch and others who argue that if there are too many panhandlers it is chiefly because there

are too many sympathetic liberals willing to give. The solution, therefore, is simply to stop giving. As Koch told a business group in June, the best policy is to "just say no" and "if you feel guilty, see a priest."

Warming to his theme a few weeks later, the mayor observed that 90 percent of panhandlers are on alcohol or drugs and that naive subway riders, by falling for their appeals, are helping to support their addictions. Finally, in mid-August the mayor announced that he was instructing William Grinker, his commissioner of human resources, to design a subway poster urging people to donate to homeless charities or advocacy groups rather than give directly to the homeless themselves.

This is probably the first time in history that anyone has accused New York subway riders of being gullible, yet Koch's supply-side argument is not entirely devoid of logic. Beggars work the subways for the same reason that Willie Sutton robbed banks—because that's where the money is. Presumably, if people gave them the cold shoulder they would depart. But if beggars are more numerous, it is not because people are suddenly more generous but because conditions are growing more desperate. People give not because they believe everything they hear but because (1) they suspect at least some portion of the tales of woe the beggars pour out is true; (2) they figure it's better to err on the side of generosity; and (3) they recognize that if there are some spectacular winners in Manhattan's superheated financial economy, there is also a growing number of conspicuous losers as well.

**Four reasons:** If so, they're right. Ed Koch notwithstanding, the problem is not on the

supply side—i.e., misplaced liberal guilt—but on the demand side—i.e., massive economic changes that have reduced thousands of people to unparalleled levels of desperation. Homelessness experts (of whom there is now no shortage) list at least four factors, all of which are present in their most extreme form in the New York economy.

Three of the four are by now well-known. One is deinstitutionalization, the wholesale emptying of psychiatric hospitals in favor of a system of out-patient care that unfortunately existed only in the imaginations of enthusiastic advocates of "community-based" medicine. According to F. Stevens Redburn and Terry F. Buss, authors of a 1986 study titled "Responding to America's Homeless," there are as many as 400,000 people in the U.S. who two decades ago would have been hospitalized, yet today are not. Conceivably, many of these people are better off on their own than in some huge and underfunded state hospital. But others who have been left to forage through garbage bags in the streets clearly are not.

Another is gentrification, a word used to describe not only the explosion in real estate prices in Manhattan south of 96th Street (and other urban centers throughout the U.S.), but also the concomitant real estate collapse in portions of the outer boroughs (see accompanying story). Since 1965 some 30,000 single-room occupancy units have been lost in Manhattan—studio apartments now rent for \$700 or more—while at the same time whole sections of the South Bronx have gone up in flames. Some sections of the city seem to overflow with wealth, yet others have rarely been more depressed.

Professionalization, the third factor, is the

analogous process in the labor market, financially fueled growth in white-collar employment coupled with a hemorrhage in blue-collar manufacturing jobs. The big losers in this respect have been young black and Hispanic men, too ill-educated for clerical jobs and otherwise unsuited for retail positions. They are what Samuel M. Ehrenhalt, regional commissioner of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, calls "the lost generation": the high school dropouts who never held a job, never entered the labor market and have subsisted through crime, hustling and, as they grow older, panhandling.

Finally, there is a fourth category, no less important though often overlooked. This is the relentless pruning of the welfare rolls and erosion of welfare benefits that, among other things, has served to deny benefits to those who are most needy. The process began in the '70s, when welfare benefits began lagging further and further behind inflation (falling 29 percent in real purchasing power from 1969-81) and accelerated in the '80s when the Reagan administration purged the Social Security disability rolls of an estimated half a million people, including a substantial number of the mentally ill unable to defend themselves. As the homeless population swelled in New York, the Koch administration resisted sheltering them (until forced by a lawsuit filed by the Coalition for the Homeless) and then refused to extend welfare benefits to those with no fixed address.

Last year Mayor Koch was forced to relent in court on this position as well, although in practice it continues. As a consequence, the Legal Action Center for the Homeless and a team from New York University found in a study of 496 adults at five New York soup kitchens last year that although nearly everyone was eligible for welfare benefits, 69 percent received no government benefits at all.

The reason, according to the center's

By Doug Turetsky

NEW YORK

**T**HE MELEES THAT ERUPTED ON JULY 30 AND August 6 on this city's Lower East Side, resulting in more than 100 complaints of police brutality, have roots far deeper than a sudden spark on a hot Saturday night. Mayor Edward Koch's decision—prompted by a local block association—to impose a curfew on Tompkins Square Park unleashed a fury of opposition.

Many saw the curfew as a direct assault on the area's poor and working-class residents who use the park as an escape from squalid, overcrowded apartments, and on the homeless, for whom the park is a safer place to sleep than a city shelter. In a neighborhood long beset by city policies aimed at ridding the area of the poor to make way for upscale redevelopment, the recent riots are just the latest chapter in a long struggle.

If Jacob Riis, whose muckraking classic *How the Other Half Lives* depicted the squalor of the Lower East Side in the 1880s, was to take a walk down some of those same streets today he'd find scenes strikingly similar. The homeless and the poor, the rubble and rot still define many portions of the community (see accompanying story). But in Riis' time, city officials were satisfied to let the Lower East Side remain a repository for each succeeding wave of immigrants—the Germans, Jews, Poles, Irish, Ukrainians and

## ...then pass the buck about city's housing crisis

others—who became the low-paid laborers shouldering the city's industrial growth. Now there's one change that would likely throw Riis for a loop: many of today's tenement residents are among the city's well to do. In a neighborhood where the median income is still just \$15,000—well below the citywide median—hundred-thousand-dollar co-ops and \$1,000-a-month studio apartments have become commonplace. The watchword on these once uniformly slum-infested streets is gentrification.

Since Riis' time, successive New York City administrations have eyed the Lower East Side as ripe for real-estate development. A 1929 master plan for the city's development envisioned the neighborhood's takeover by a monied class of professionals. Stretching roughly from 14th to Canal streets and bounded by Third Avenue and the East River, the Lower East Side is ideally situated, from a developer's point of view, between the two havens of the city's monetary production—Wall Street and Midtown's canyon of corporate headquarters.

**Full steam ahead:** But it wasn't until 1959 that the first large-scale effort to redevelop and repopulate the Lower East Side was

launched. Robert Moses, a city official whose exploits as the "master builder" are legendary, promoted an urban renewal plan for a large swath of the Lower East Side. The plan called for bulldozing the Cooper Square area and erecting luxury co-ops, says Val Orselli, executive director of the Cooper Square Committee. The committee was formed in response to the city's plan, and it successfully defeated the proposal. It was the first of several similar battles.

In 1965 the city's Board of Estimate passed an urban renewal plan for a 14-block section of the neighborhood near Delancey Street. Two years later the city cleared the site, known as the Seward Park Urban Renewal Area, of its 1,840 residents, most of whom were poor and minority. Though the original plan called for building 1,440 units of middle- and upper-income housing, promises were made that the former residents could return to any housing built in the area.

According to Lisa Kaplan, a longtime Lower East Side resident and activist, urban renewal at Seward Park has been an effort "to spread middle-income housing and make it available to a primarily white population." When a 360-unit public housing project was

finally built in 1974 on one site in the urban renewal area, it took a court fight, led by a coalition of community groups under the banner of the Lower East Side Joint Planning Council, to have leases distributed to 160 residents who had been displaced. In 1980 then-Manhattan Borough President Andrew Stein successfully blocked a plan to build an additional 100 units of federally funded low-income housing in Seward Park.

A different kind of slum clearance was being tried in another section of the Lower East Side. In the early '70s, then-city Housing Commissioner Roger Starr advocated a concept known as planned shrinkage. Essential services like fire, police and sanitation were trimmed and the community began to cannibalize itself. Slumlords milked the buildings for every last nickel while refusing to make any repairs. Many such buildings were eventually torched for the insurance money. Several hundred buildings long since abandoned by the owners fell into city ownership for back taxes. One of the hardest hit areas was the predominantly Hispanic section of the Lower East Side known as Loissaida, which lost some 70 percent of its residents during this period.



executive director Doug Lasdon and staff attorney Pat Horvath, is that the welfare system has become too restrictive, too difficult, too daunting for an increasing number to maneuver. "It's a Darwinian system in which the players are already the weakest members of society to begin with," said Horvath. "The people who need help the most find it the toughest to negotiate."

The people who work in the system are

often rude and intimidating, Lasdon and Horvath have found, mistakes are frequent and if someone is improperly dropped from the rolls, the worst that will happen is that an administrative judge will order benefits restored. Mistakes go unpunished, and the city has no incentive to tighten up its procedures. The result is a growing subwelfare class made up of people so poor and despised that they aren't even deemed suitable for relief.

Of course, the systematic denial of benefits is a way of balancing the budget at the expense of the poor and hence of "discouraging" poverty by punishing it. The strategy goes back to Henry VIII, who ordered that beggars be whipped "until their bodies are bloody" and to the Roman playwright Plautus before him who held: "He deserves ill of a beggar who gives him to eat or to drink, for he both loses what he gives and prolongs a life of misery."

In 1877 the Charity Organization Society of New York, which included some of the richest people in the city, called on the police to cease providing overnight shelter to the down-and-out because it promoted indolence and dependence. (Rather than giving them alms, the society proposed instead to instill the poor with "self-respect, hope, ambition, courage and character.") More recently, according to *Time* magazine, city commissioners in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., have proposed sprinkling rat poison in dumpsters to discourage the homeless from rooting through garbage, while Phoenix, Ariz., according to a study by three homeless advocates, has declared trash to be the property of the state, thereby subjecting scavengers to a fine or jail for "stealing public property."

Koch's campaign to discourage begging is in the same vein. If the mayor goes through with his anti-begging posters, it will not be to eliminate poverty, but to remove the human evidence that the great New York economic boom, now in its 12th uninterrupted year, is more one-sided and incomplete than he cares to admit. There are now scores of soup kitchens in New York and hundreds of churches, synagogues and volunteer organizations offering temporary shelter, yet there's not enough to meet the need.

Even when available, welfare is grossly inadequate—a cash grant of \$45 per month for city shelter residents, not enough even for transit fare, plus \$50 to \$75 per month in food stamps. If people donate to soup kitchens and the like, as the mayor suggests, some of those services may eventually improve. But it will still leave the homeless with the immediate day-to-day struggle of finding food and a place to sleep.

"If the services were out there, what he's saying wouldn't necessarily be wrong," said Ed Abrahams, New York director of the Coalition for the Homeless. "But until services are improved, you just can't know whether someone panhandling is pulling a scam or is really in need."

Daniel Lazare is a regular contributor to *In These Times*.



New York Mayor Ed Koch urges city residents to "just say no" to homeless people asking for money. As Koch puts it, "If you feel guilty, see a priest."

**Here come the realtors:** But before the smoke had cleared, the real estate speculators descended on the neighborhood. The first wave of speculators would buy a building, harass the remaining tenants until it was emptied and then sell it to another speculator. Eventually, a building would be rehabbed and apartments rented—or sold—for many times the previous rate.

Rents rose, co-ops sprouted and the complexion of the neighborhood—both economically and racially—began to change. The city, which had become the largest single

## NEW YORK CITY

landholder in the area during the period of abandonment—used its portfolio to encourage the process of gentrification rather than provide housing for the growing legion of poorly housed or homeless. The Christodora, a 16-story building opposite Tompkins Square Park, has come to symbolize the city's role in fueling gentrification. In 1965 the city sold the building for \$62,500. Eight years later it was sold to another speculator for \$1.3 million, who "flipped" it the next year for more than twice what he paid. Today, apartments in the Christodora, which was rehabbed with the help of generous tax abatements, fetch up to \$1 million.

The Koch administration has mastered the art of using city-owned property to spur gen-

trification. But in 1983 Lower East Side community groups were able to stop a thinly veiled scheme known as Artists Housing. The city planned to use several of its tax-foreclosed buildings, along with scarce federal funds, to create co-ops for artists. At \$50,000 each, few of the area's indigenous artists could afford the proposed units.

Local groups did more than simply fight the city's attempts to prime the pump of market forces. Community organizations like Cooper Square and Pueblo Nuevo secured buildings through various programs for low-income tenants. Pueblo Nuevo, for example, operates or has established through limited-equity tenant ownership some 300 units of low-income housing in one section of the Lower East Side.

The city is often a reluctant partner in such endeavors. While community activists targeted the city-owned Cube Building as a site for homeless housing, city officials moved to deal the building to a private developer for \$1. The city eventually acceded to the community plan—but charged the community-group sponsors \$11,000 for the building.

According to Roz Post, a spokeswoman for the city's Department of Housing Preservation and Development, there are still 151 vacant and 69 occupied city-owned buildings in the Lower East Side area. In a community where some 30 percent of the house-

holds live below the poverty line and many families pay 40 percent or more of their monthly income for rent, these buildings are an invaluable resource. City officials and the Joint Planning Council (JPC) hammered out a plan two years ago to sell half of these buildings to developers and use the proceeds to renovate the other half to house the community's poor. Frances Goldin, a JPC member and area activist for the past 44 years, accuses the city of "dragging its ass" and failing to move on the agreement.

**The natives are restless:** Over the past few years a self-styled band of squatters—who are primarily young and white and, some say, recent arrivals from the suburbs—has moved into several city-owned buildings and provoked controversies with officials. Though the older activists have had their share of confrontations with the police and city officials, this group of squatters accuses JPC members of having sold out. It was these squatters and their sympathizers who provoked the recent clashes over the closing of Tompkins Square Park.

The controversy between the squatters and other activists may have more to do with lifestyle than politics. The revelers at a recent rally in the park celebrating Koch's lifting of the curfew were primarily white and young. Behind a banner decrying gentrification, speakers declared recent events part of a "people's uprising."

But Chino Garcia, a longtime neighborhood resident and activist who heads the community group Charas, points out that many of the squatters have opposed plans to build senior-citizen housing and a project for low-income families in the neighborhood. And when the city recently unveiled a plan for mega-developer Sam LeFrak to build 400 luxury condos, 640 middle-income and just 160 below-market-rate rental units in the Seward Park Urban Renewal Area, the squatters failed to join the protests.

For years, as the city's housing crisis has worsened, the Koch administration has failed to confront the problem. When it does provide programs, like the recently announced 10-year, \$5 billion plan, the Koch administration fails to target most of the subsidized units to the 75 percent of New Yorkers who earn less than \$25,000 annually.

But the Lower East Side squatters, rather than pushing the mayor to provide enough low-income housing, may actually be playing into the administration's hand. With attention now focused on the park protests, which have now spread across town to Washington Square Park, the larger issue of gentrification becomes obscured. And by dividing the local opposition to the mayor, it makes it easier for the Koch administration to proceed with business as usual.

Doug Turetsky is editor of *City Limits*, a New York alternative monthly.



By Daniel Lazare

MOUNT VERNON, N.Y.

**F**OR THOSE WHO RECALL HIS GRANDFATHER as a die-hard reactionary conservative and know his father as a liberal Republican, the most remarkable thing about Hamilton Fish III's bid to become the latest member of his family to enter Congress is that he's running as a Democrat. But leftists who know him as the publisher of *The Nation* from 1977 until last year might have cause for surprise as well.

The reason is that Ham Fish is aiming for the mainstream. The young Harvard grad who helped rescue *The Nation* from bankruptcy so it could go on to challenge some of the reigning political orthodoxies of the day is today mounting a political campaign in Westchester County, N.Y., that is distinctly...well, orthodox.

On the Middle East, for instance, the 37-year-old candidate declared at a July 28 public forum that he supports "the security and the survival of Israel first and foremost, and I would look at all issues in the Middle East through that filter." While opposed to weapons for the contras, he said in a recent telephone interview that he would not entirely oppose other kinds of assistance if needed to "sustain negotiations in Nicaragua." He has taken up the Democratic war-cry against drugs and said he might support efforts to intervene in Panama to overthrow Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega if other nations in the region agree. He opposes drug legalization because it would "send the wrong message," and favors instead education, stricter law enforcement and international cooperation so drugs can be halted at the source.

Fish also told *In These Times* that he re-

# Fish swims into the mainstream: a former *Nation* exec's House bid

gards the Soviets as threatening and expansionist because "they view their destiny from their perspective of class conflict.... They've sent tanks into the capitals of Eastern Europe and maintain armies of occupation in different areas. I think they differ in real ways from us, and there's no moral symmetry."

The result, in contrast to the practiced iconoclasm of the magazine he headed for a decade, is a world view that sticks fairly close to Democratic fundamentals in the age of Dukakis-Bentsen—partial military disengagement from Nicaragua combined with the possibility of military intervention in Panama; virtually uncritical support for Israel and a similar disregard for Palestinian national rights; and a firm belief in the underlying moral superiority of the U.S. vs. the Soviet Union.

**No hard ball:** Fish's cautious, conventional approach was much in evidence two weeks ago at a Democratic forum in a run-down black neighborhood in Mount Vernon that belies Westchester's reputation as an affluent New York suburb. In order to minimize the sort of conflict that has split the Democratic Party in Westchester in the past, the format was designed to minimize debate between Fish and his two opponents—Nita Lowey, a former assistant New York secretary of state, and Dennis Mehiel, a cardboard box manufacturer. While babies cried and ladies fanned themselves, members of the audience did

their part by lobbing softball questions for the candidates to field effortlessly.

The three candidates were asked their political heroes (Lowey said Hubert Humphrey and Mario Cuomo; Mehiel said Martin Luther King Jr. and John and Robert Kennedy; Fish said his father and Allard Lowenstein) and how long they had lived in Westchester (six years, said Lowey; eight, said Mehiel; since last summer, confessed Fish, who moved to Westchester with the express purpose of running for Congress).

When someone asked about Federal District Judge Leonard Sand's housing desegregation order that has spurred a widespread civic revolt in neighboring Yonkers, Fish replied that political leadership was required

## CAMPAIGN 88

to bring the parties in the dispute together, all of whom, he said, "have good intentions." Lowey answered similarly, leaving it to Mehiel, the supposed neo-conservative in the race, to point out that not all the parties in the Yonkers dispute are well-intentioned and that "some racism is at work, no doubt about it." When a black homeowner asked how the Democrats could promise to increase social spending "and not tax me into becoming the new homeless," Fish answered that there is "no government constituency for new taxes" and that "the challenge for Democrats is to remain faithful to traditional Democratic values of compassion and fairness in an era of scarce resources."

After each reply, no matter how bland, each candidate's personal cheering section applauded loudly.

Actually, blandness could work in Fish's favor in the primary, just as Dukakis is counting on it to work in his favor in the presiden-

tial election. Since neither of his opponents is particularly well-known, the fact that his father, Hamilton Fish Jr., has represented a neighboring congressional district for 20 years and is highly regarded in Westchester gives him a considerable edge. Another factor is the fallout from his feud with his 99-year-old grandfather, Franklin D. Roosevelt's old nemesis, which is far from entirely negative. Those voters who remember Hamilton Fish Sr. recall him as the man who met with leaders of the German government in August 1939, vacationed in Ribbentrop's castle and, at a mass meeting of his own National Committee to Keep America Out of Foreign Wars, once asked, "Who made our foreign policy?"—to which the crowd roared back: "The Jews, the Yiddles, the kikes!"

Thus, Fish's public denunciation of his grandson as a "communist appeaser" who is "undermining and belittling a family tradition" by running as a Democrat will hardly do him much harm and would more likely win him sympathy points with Westchester's substantial population of liberal Jewish voters—not to mention injecting a bit of spark into an otherwise lifeless primary campaign.

**Facing *The Nation*:** Of course, there could be life after September 15 when the winner of the Democratic primary comes face to face with Joseph J. DioGuardi, the two-term Republican incumbent. A certified public accountant whose chief effort to date has been in trying to reform federal accounting procedures, DioGuardi is among the least-known and least-distinguished members of Congress. But he stresses constituent services, has amassed a million-dollar-plus campaign fund and handily defeated Bella Abzug in 1986 by hauling out old quotes by Mario Cuomo ("Bella, you're lying...and you're good at it"). He is clearly a formidable force on the campaign trail.

But if Fish wins the primary, he will undoubtedly concentrate on DioGuardi's support for Star Wars and the B-1 bomber, his votes against water pollution control and his effort to gut South African sanctions, all of which go against the grain of this usually moderate-to-liberal voting district.

In turn, DioGuardi will likely quote from some of *The Nation*'s more provocative editorials and articles against Israeli suppression of Palestinian rights and the U.S. raid on Libya and ask voters why, if they wouldn't vote for someone who wrote such things, should they vote for someone who published them?

Fish says of his publishing days that "it will be an asset for people who admire the work I did and a liability for people who want to exploit the editorial extravagances of *The Nation*. But *The Nation* isn't running for office—I am—and my approach and values and personal feelings about these issues will be a matter of public record." He doesn't want the election to be a referendum on *The Nation*, but, he said, "a referendum on DioGuardi's record."

Nonetheless, while Hamilton Fish III is ready and willing to enter the mainstream, the question facing him in Westchester is whether the mainstream is ready for him.

Daniel Lazare is a regular contributor to *In These Times*.

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By Mike Tangeman

MEXICO CITY

**O**PPPOSITION PARTIES HERE RAN UP AGAINST the hard reality of a ruling Revolutionary Institutional Party (PRI) majority during two weeks of chaotic debate in congressional Electoral Colleges over who won Mexico's July 6 national elections.

The fight over ratification of election victories in the divided Chamber of Deputies turned into a running battle complete with filibusters, vote boycotts and walkouts by both the opposition National Democratic Front-Mexican Socialist Party (FDN-PMS) coalition and the conservative National Action Party (PAN). Fearing violent retaliation, the FDN-PMS coalition changed its tactics and dropped previous calls for mass mobilization during the college meeting. Instead, hundreds of opposition supporters staged a sit-in outside the congress building for the entire two weeks of the debate, demanding that the real outcome of the July 6 vote be respected.

Faced with absolute intransigence from the closed ranks of the ruling party, the opposition managed to come off no better in numerical terms than when it went into the debate—when the dust settled on August 31 the PRI held 260 of 500 seats in the new Chamber, to 139 for the FDN-PMS coalition and 101 for the PAN. The opposition did win a significant moral victory, however, by breaking the mold of the PRI's "rubber stamp" legislature, long a major obstacle to the democratization of Mexico's virtual one-party political system.

"We will now have a legislature that speaks out, that debates. That means an end to the 'presidentialist' system and the end to political centralization," said Octavio Moreno, a founder of Mexico's small Social Democrat Party (PSD) and deputy-elect for the FDN.

But the opposition lost on the key issue of recounting ballots of districts where the vote was allegedly fraudulent—a defeat that could come back to haunt them this month when the ratification of the presidential election begins.

**Sticking points:** Allegations of vote fraud in the election still have not been cleared up. On July 13 the Federal Electoral Commission (CFE) declared PRI presidential candidate Carlos Salinas de Gortari the winner with 50.36 percent of the vote. But to date the CFE has withheld figures for the presi-



Opposition candidate Cardenas speaks to a crowd outside Electoral College meetings.

## Opposition forces lose vote-count battle; could win parliamentary war

dential vote from 24,625 polls—45 percent of the total nationwide.

Neither center-left candidate Cuauhtemoc Cardenas—awarded second place by the CFE with 30.12 percent—nor PAN candidate Manuel Clouthier—placed third, with 17.07 percent—has accepted the official results.

### MEXICO

And many observers here believe Cardenas may have edged out Salinas in the presidential election.

Since July opposition efforts to prove vote fraud have been stonewalled both in the Court of Electoral Contentions and in the full assembly of the CFE itself. Despite repeated assurances from Interior Secretary Manuel Bartlett of access to electoral packets containing ballots from all 54,624 polls when the Electoral College began, the opposition was voted down by the PRI majority each time it asked to have the packets

opened in order to check the vote tabulations.

"We see no reason to open the packets when the CFE has ruled in our favor, when the Electoral Court has ruled in our favor and when it is clear that the majority of Mexicans voted in favor of PRI candidates," said PRI Deputy-elect Guadalupe Gomez.

At one point, opposition deputies led by PAN parliamentary coordinator Abel Vicencio stormed down to the basement of the congress building to confront soldiers guarding the packets and demand that they be released.

"If they're not here to be opened by the Electoral College in order to resolve doubts about the election, then what are they here for?" asked PAN Deputy-elect Norberto Corella.

The opposition was not only unable to get the packets opened—and thus failed to set a precedent for the important presidential ratification debate—but it lost every vote to the mechanical PRI majority. In addition, divisions over strategy questions developed within the Cardenas coalition, with the PMS twice refusing to sign procedural accords with the PRI that its FDN colleagues went along with.

**Parties for everyone:** While the election united the Mexican left for the first time ever around the figure of Cuauhtemoc Cardenas, the diverse backgrounds and ideologies of the FDN-PMS parties highlight the difficulty Cardenas faces in keeping them together.

- The Democratic Current (CD) is not yet a party, but a former PRI faction that broke away after the party leaders refused to register Cardenas as candidate for the PRI's presidential nomination. The CD has the least number of FDN Chamber seats but all four Senate opposition seats.

- The Party of the Authentic Mexican Revolution (PARM) was considered a "loyal opposition," or "satellite," party to the PRI prior to becoming the first party to endorse Car-

denas. The most centrist of the FDN parties, the PARM is described by party leaders as "revolutionary, nationalist and progressive."

- The Cardenist Front of National Reconstruction Party (PFCRN), formerly the Socialist Workers Party (PST), was the second party to back Cardenas. It has a socialist ideology, a corporatist bent and was previously a "loyal opposition" party. Although Cardenas did not endorse the name change, the party's shrewd move has led many voters to believe that the "Frente Cardenista" is the candidate's own party.

- The Popular Socialist Party (PPS), founded in 1948 by labor leader Vicente Lombardo, was the third party to endorse Cardenas. It is Marxist-Leninist in theory but in practice has always been a well-behaved PRI satellite.

- The Mexican Socialist Party (PMS), heir to the old Mexican Communist Party, has evolved through a series of '80s mergers with other left parties and movements into a Eurocommunist-style party. When the PMS agreed to support Cardenas in June, it signed a bilateral accord with the CD rather than the FDN—probably due to past disputes with the PPS and PST over the claim to ideological legitimacy on the left.

**United they stand:** On the question of ratification of the presidential election, FDN-PMS deputies say they will be united in trying to deny Salinas the presidency. Meanwhile, the coalition is developing a strategy obviously designed to lure away local leaders and the bases from the ruling party.

In Tabasco the PRI's state party chairman has defected to become the FDN gubernatorial candidate in November elections and other party leaders have followed suit. The phenomenon is now being repeated in Veracruz, also the scene of upcoming state elections. And in the Chamber itself, one PRI deputy—also from Tabasco—has said he will switch to the FDN after the Congress is installed.

In various parts of the country, cracks are showing in the PRI's corporatist structure. There have been defections from the PRI-affiliated National Campesino Confederation (CNC) and the National Confederation of Popular Organizations (CNOP) to parallel organizations cleverly set up by the PFCRN—the Cardenist Campesino Confederation and the Cardenist Confederation of Popular Organizations.

According to PMS Deputy Juan Guerra, what the left needs to do now is "to set up a labor central, to channel discontent among the rank and file." That discontent can only grow as a result of the August 14 decision of the leadership of the Labor Congress (CT)—dominated by the PRI-affiliated Confederation of Mexican Workers (CTM)—to drop demands for wage hikes as part of the accord to extend the government's inflation-cutting "Economic Solidarity Pact" after September 1.

Some FDN sources talk off-the-record of a parliamentary strategy designed to drive a wedge between PRI leadership and bases. They say that a flood of FDN-PMS-sponsored populist bills will force PRI deputies to make a tough choice—either to vote for the legislation and please their constituencies or vote with the PRI bloc against the FDN-PMS and face discontent and further defections among the party's bases.

Mike Tangeman is *In These Times'* correspondent in Mexico.

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### Death toll adds up even if vote doesn't

MEXICO CITY—The brutal murders of four young activists involved in the "defend the vote" movement have shocked public opinion here in the election aftermath.

At 3:30 a.m. on August 21 the bodies of Jesus Ramos, 16; Jose Luis Garcia, 17; Jorge Flores, 17; and Ernesto del Arco, 18, were found abandoned in a car belonging to del Arco's father. They had been beaten and shot in the head at close range.

Luis del Arco, father of the victim and former deputy candidate for the Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT), said his son and friends did not belong to any party but had been participating in the movement to "defend the vote" promoted by the National Democratic Front-Mexican Socialist Party (FDN-PMS) coalition and the PRT. Also found in the car were fliers urging passive

civil resistance. The youths had apparently been distributing the leaflets.

Despite the evidence, Federal District Attorney Renato Sales immediately ruled out a political motive in the killings. Nonetheless, the prosecutor conceded there are indications that the four may have been murdered by plainclothes judicial police.

The murders bring to six the number of apparent reprisal murders of people associated with the campaign of FDN-PMS candidate Cuauhtemoc Cardenas. On July 2 Cardenas campaign aides Francisco J. Ovando and Ramon Gil were also found shot to death in Ovando's parked car.

According to Mexican human rights workers, there have been 13 politically motivated murders nationwide since July 2.

—M.T.



By Jan Knippers Black

RANGOON, BURMA

**W**HEN BURMESE PRESIDENT MAUNG Maung Kha pledged on August 24 to schedule a referendum on restoring multiparty democracy here, he closed one chapter in the saga of Burma's popular uprising of 1988. Throngs danced in the streets as troops withdrew from the city center, the curfew was lifted and martial law was revoked.

Maung Maung further pledged that if the referendum favored a multiparty system, general elections would be held as soon as possible. No top government officials would be candidates, he claimed. And should the military-based Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP) object to the democratization plan, the party's new civilian leadership would resign.

Perhaps the message was not entirely clear to the security forces, or perhaps they did not feel inclined to follow the president's lead. On August 25-26 guards at the Insein Prison on the outskirts of Rangoon opened fire on protesting inmates, who were mostly political prisoners. State-run Rangoon radio reported that 500 of the prisoners had escaped, 4,806 (of a prison population of some 10,000) had been released, 106 wounded and 57 killed. Other sources reported that about 1,000 prisoners had been shot to death.

Burmese dissidents, however, seemed to take the president at his word. On August 28 about 50,000 people attended a coming-out party at Rangoon University for the All Burma Students Union, which brought together organizations that had operated underground for several years. But it is not yet clear whether hardliners of the military and the ruling party have played their last card. The political crisis now moves to a new phase, yet it is far from over.

# Burma: unclear future for land in fast-forward

**Power plays:** A province of British India until World War II, Burma enjoyed only 14 years of democracy before succumbing to a tenacious dictatorship in 1962. Members of the same coterie of rebels who supported the Japanese invasion in 1942—believing the Japanese to be liberators—then supported the British three years later as they expelled

## ASIA

the Japanese and established the first government of independent Burma in 1948. At its founding the new government was a multiparty parliamentary democracy. But civilian rule eroded over the years and the military, called upon to suppress separatist movements among ethnic minorities around the fringes of the national territory, grew bolder.

In 1962 armed forces commander Gen. Ne Win, who had been accused of brutally suppressing minority tribes, turned on his erstwhile colleague Prime Minister U Nu and deposed him. Ne Win founded a new party, the BSPP, and outlawed all others. But his main power base was the increasingly privileged military.

Ethnic minorities, in some cases led by warlords and funded by opium and heroin trafficking, have over the years engaged in sporadic fighting with the forces of the central government. The anti-government campaign was joined early on by the country's educational and religious institutions. Students and Buddhist monks were prominent among those who resisted Ne Win's *coup d'état* 26 years ago and as a consequence suffered scores of casualties. Grievances mounted when Ne Win's troops burned down the student union building and outlawed student organizations shortly after the coup.

The riots that erupted in March at the national university in Rangoon left some 300 dead and added hundreds more to the list of political prisoners the students had sought to free.

Anti-government rioting, led by university students, broke out again in June, and Rangoon remained under curfew until the end of the month. The university remained closed in July, and it appeared that the rebellion had been effectively suppressed once again. But faculty sources reported that the students had actually won the latest showdown. The government had yielded to many of their demands, including calls for the release of political prisoners. Even some of those within the government supported the unrest. A professor who also holds a responsible government position told *In These Times* her co-workers in the ministry do not hold her under suspicion because of her university connection. On the contrary, she said, they are all in sympathy with the students.

Nor is contempt for the government limited to the urban middle class; it draws upon a wellspring of frustration that has no apparent class or regional bounds. In the small town that is present-day Pagan, where 5,000 Buddhist temples rise from the plain in silent tribute to an ancient civilization, a horse carriage driver can recite in some detail and with barely suppressed anger the recent history of government atrocities against the op-

position.

**A day in the country:** A July train ride in the Burmese countryside demonstrated the contradictions of this ancient land in crisis. Even on the eve of a massive uprising, the rhythm of life along the Irrawaddy River seemed not to have changed much since it was immortalized by Rudyard Kipling in his poem "Mandalay." On the 14-hour journey by train from Rangoon to Mandalay, the antique "upper class" coach, utterly devoid of shock absorbers, was cooled by ceiling fans and inhabited by extended families of spiders, mice and other tropical fauna. Two senior monks, barefoot and draped in simple saffron robes, were accompanied by younger monks or novices who attended to their elders' needs and prostrated themselves fully—touching their foreheads to the filthy floor of the coach—before withdrawing.

Across the aisle sat a slender, middle-aged man in uniform. He, too, had an entourage of servants—mostly enlisted men. One of his orderlies lowered the heavy metal window beside him at the beginning of the trip, even though the heat was oppressive. The monks referred to him deferentially as "the general."

While the monks chewed on their betel nut in detached tranquility and other passengers gazed through open windows at people and oxen at work in flooded rice paddies, the general appeared to be meditating or praying for hours on end with clasped hands,

closed eyes and furrowed brow. Finally he stirred and an orderly laid out for him a multicourse meal, kept hot in a portable container.

The general then began to notice his fellow passengers and even graciously offered some of his tea. During the rest of the trip, before he alighted to a heel-clicking military welcome at Meiktila, he often stretched to peer out of the windows ahead of and behind his own. He did not, however, raise the metal sheet that shielded him from assassination or other untoward attention.

The episode began to make sense when one of his attendants confided that he was the commander of the People's Police Force (PPF) in Rangoon. The next day a newspaper reported that Rangoon's police commander had been demoted and transferred. His superior, the director-general of the PPF, had been fired and other officers were reprimanded in connection with an incident that had occurred during the student riots of last March.

Burma's official news agency that day conceded for the first time that 41 detainees had died in police custody. They had been squeezed into a single police van, along with 30 others who survived, and left for two hours after police, using tear gas, broke up

## The political crisis now moves to a new phase, yet it is far from over.

a demonstration. An official inquiry found that they died of tear-gas inhalation and suffocation. It was hard to imagine that the man on the train—frail, contemplative, even gen-

### URGENT HUMANITARIAN APPEAL!

In an appeal to the international human rights community, 12 of the 2800 Palestinian prisoners held without charges or trial in the "Ansar III" prison camp in the Negev Desert have sent out a signed petition seeking urgent assistance to secure adequate water, food, medical care, family contacts and access to legal counsel. These prisoners are held 28 to a tent and, as punishment, are often forced to sit in the blazing sun or placed in metallic containers for hours on end in temperatures reaching 120 degrees. This prison should be closed now.

We urge you to write or telegram:

Ambassador Moshe Arad  
Embassy of Israel  
3514 International Dr., NW  
Washington, DC 20008

Itzhak Rabin  
Ministry of Defense  
W. Jerusalem, Israel

Please send a copy of your letter to:

ADC -- Ansar III Project  
4201 Conn. Ave., N.W.,  
Suite 500  
Washington, DC 20008



Dorothy Friesen, Synapses

Burma has enjoyed only 14 years of democracy in recent history.





Despite reports in the Western press, Burma suffers shortages only in imported goods that middle classes everywhere find essential.

teel—was the villain of that piece, but in Burma many things are not as they appear.

**The real story:** The grim portrait that emerged a couple of weeks later when the country caught the international media spotlight—that of a land with a rigid military dictatorship, a tightly controlled socialist economy and a population languishing in poverty—failed to capture the ironies and eccentricities of the uprising and its setting. Burma certainly lacks most of the appurtenances of the modern world. Even the traces of 18th-century technology left by the British constitute an awkward overlay on a way of life that belongs to earlier centuries. But the country's heartland is exuberantly green and fertile. And compared, for example, to the harsh poverty of neighboring India or Bangladesh, Burma's slow-paced, unpolluted towns and villages seem pleasant—almost idyllic—and the people healthy and animated.

Reports filed in Bangkok attributed much of the popular unrest to acute shortages. In fact, the only serious shortages were of the imported goods that middle classes everywhere find essential. But the inflation, deriving from a sinking currency and a thriving black market, is very real.

As of late July the dollar's value on the black market was six times the official exchange rate. Those who deal in money and other illegal goods and services show little concern about being apprehended. Far from the kind of "tight ship" one might expect of a socialist-military regime, business in Burma, legal or otherwise, borders on anarchy. Government employees do not seem to take official regulations very seriously. In fact, they often volunteer advice on how to circumvent them. And illegal operations were profitably "protected" by public officials on the take.

Tourists are not allowed to travel overland by bus or taxi unless they have made special arrangements with the official agency, Tourist Burma. So drivers of unauthorized taxis peel off bribes at security checkpoints to uniformed officials who show no hint of embarrassment about the transaction.

It almost seems to work, but a government so cravenly corrupted cannot hope to enjoy legitimacy. And what little authority it retains has been squandered by its heavy-handed and unimaginative response to opposition. Even so, on the part of such a graceful and gentle-spirited people, an uprising

as massive and unrelenting as that of August 1988 still seems incongruous.

**Origins of the uprising:** Security forces kept a low profile for most of July. But on July 22 heavily armed troops lined Rangoon's major thoroughfares in preparation for a congress of the ruling party that was called to consider economic and political reforms. At that meeting Gen. Ne Win, 77 years old, stunned his compatriots and the world by announcing that he was resigning as chairman of the party. (He had earlier stepped down from the presidency, but without relinquishing authority.) Furthermore, he assumed indirect responsibility for "the tragic events of March and June" and suggested staging a referendum on scrapping the single-party system and adopting a multiparty form of government.

But to the assembled leaders that must have sounded like "partycide." They selected

as Ne Win's successor the man most likely to hold the line against democratization, retired Gen. Sein Lwin, BSPP joint secretary. As the man responsible for riot police and internal security since the *coup d'etat* of 1962, his selection virtually guaranteed that the students, monks and other opposition groups would return to the streets.

Sein Lwin pledged to open up the economy, easing restrictions on trade and foreign investment. The tone of international media coverage suggested that the West was prepared to accept him. But the Burmese were not.

On July 30 Sein Lwin's government detained 10 people, including the outspoken and highly respected dissident, Gen. Aung Gyi and Burmese Associated Press correspondent Sein Win. On August 3 thousands of young people took to the streets, and the government declared martial law. Over the next

eight days the crowds in the streets of Rangoon and other Burmese cities continued to swell, from thousands to tens of thousands, despite a government policy of firing real bullets point-blank at the demonstrators. The government has since acknowledged 112 civilian deaths in those clashes. Yet non-governmental sources generally believe that more than 1,000 were killed.

Along with civilian insurrection there were rumors of mutiny within the security forces. When it became unclear whether civilians were seizing weapons from police stations and military bases or whether police and troops were distributing weapons to civilians, the government began to retreat.

On August 12 Gen. Sein Lwin resigned from the presidency and the chairmanship of the party. Party delegates met again on August 19 and this time chose a civilian leader for the first time in 26 years. The new president and party leader, Maung Maung, who served as prime minister before the shake-up that accompanied Ne Win's resignation, is considered a "moderate." Nevertheless, a few thousand demonstrators continued to gather on the street in front of the Rangoon General Hospital on subsequent days, and a general strike on August 22 once again brought tens of thousands into the streets to demand an opening for multiparty democracy. By August the strike had spread to Mandalay and other cities, and the tens of thousands had become hundreds of thousands.

Serene, timeless Burma is now on fast-forward, and whatever the short-term options and scenarios, they most likely will not include stability. The upheaval in Burma may well represent the wave of the near future for much of Asia, as hard-working, long-suffering, politically marginalized peoples develop a keener sense not only of their vulnerabilities, but of their potential as well. □

**Jan Knippers Black** is a research professor of public administration at the University of New Mexico. She recently returned from Burma.

## Burma in revolt—U.S. misses the boat

By Andrew Sullivan

WASHINGTON, D.C.

**B**OTCHED U.S. POLICY TOWARD INDEPENDENT Burma began early. In 1953 the Burmese government terminated all U.S. aid because of U.S. assistance to Kuomintang rebels operating in Burmese territory. Since then the record has been little better. An Agency for International Development program to Burma supplies a paltry \$7 million worth of medical aid and technology to make cooking oil. The only substantial aid is for anti-narcotics programs in the Golden Triangle area. The U.S. has been supplying Rangoon with single-engine Thrust aircraft and the herbicide 2,4-D (which has been linked to cancer in two recent studies). The spraying has occurred in rebel ethnic areas, wiping out both the opium crop and food for the inhabitants. Several deaths have been reported in the region linked to 2,4-D. Refugees from Burmese hill tribes have recently been fleeing into Thailand.

As to U.S. contact with opposition groups, there has been virtually none in recent years, although the State Department hints it is developing contacts now. Over the last month, public statements of support for the democratic uprising have also been remarkably weak. In early August department spokeswoman Phyllis Oakley managed the follow-

ing defense of the killing of an estimated 1,500 civilians by soldiers: "We deplore the shooting of unarmed demonstrators and believe that non-lethal means should be employed to deal with such demonstrations." The department has not filed a protest over the killings.

In marked contrast with its Central American policy, the Reagan administration has also taken an extremely skeptical attitude to the ethnic insurgents in the north and east of the country who are fighting Rangoon for the political pluralism they enjoyed before 1962. Washington believes the groups are too mired in narcotics-trafficking to be trusted. (Never mind U.S. connections with drug-trafficking rebel groups in Central America.)

Washington also holds that the groups are not interested in much beyond controlling their own populations. Such skepticism has some basis: as with most guerrilla organizations, there are mixed motives and dubious means involved. But that a stronger ethnic resistance would increase pressure on Rangoon for moves toward greater pluralism has long been indisputable. As it is, Rangoon has long pursued a vicious military campaign against the ethnic rebels. Amnesty International last fall cited numerous human rights abuses in the campaign, including forced

labor, mass killings and rape.

Even when the groups united last September in a specifically pro-democratic alliance, their Washington representatives were given 10 minutes with a State Department official. No aid has yet been given, nor will it be. In fact, in the 2,4-D herbicide program, Washington may actually be strengthening Rangoon's hand.

Nor are there any plans for a major statement of support for the domestic uprising from a senior member of the administration. Reports in the *Washington Post* that there were U.S. plans to air-drop food supplies to demonstrators if the impasse continued were subsequently denied. According to a Burmese opposition member in exile, Washington has changed its tune in recent days: "They talk to us a little more civilly nowadays. A man from the State Department said, 'We cannot either support or oppose you, but we need to know what you're doing.' I'm not sure what that means." It means simply that, as far as the Reagan administration is concerned, there are movements for democracy and movements for democracy. And to the State Department, some are more moving than others. □

**Andrew Sullivan** is associate editor of *The New Republic*.



# SANCTIONS- BUSTING,

By Steve Askin

MBABANE, SWAZILAND

WHILE THE U.S. CONGRESS CONSIDERS tough new plans for economic action against South Africa, the real impact of sanctions—those already on the books and the new plan scheduled for Senate consideration this month—actually depends on an issue rarely addressed in the congressional debate: will the U.S. crack down on sanctions-busters?

South African businesses have developed many methods for evading sanctions pressure with help from covert allies worldwide. Pretoria's networks of secretive economic links involve key economic actors in nations across the political spectrum: fellow pariah states like Taiwan and Israel; the U.S., Britain and most other Western powers; anti-apartheid Holland; even the Soviet Union. Billions of dollars worth of strategic imports ranging from oil to weapons annually reach South Africa through third countries. And scores, perhaps hundreds, of firms falsely label South African exports as products of other countries.

Paradoxically, this sanctions-busting explosion represents a kind of victory for the anti-apartheid movement's drive to raise the cost of apartheid, because sanctions-busters make Pretoria pay a high price for their services. South African President P.W. Botha admitted two years ago, in a rare moment of candor, that the international oil embargo, nominally backed by every major petroleum producer but quietly violated by many, had increased South Africa's fuel costs by a staggering 22 billion rand (about \$10 billion) over the previous dozen years. U.S. Rep. Robert Wise (D-WV), Congress' leading oil-sanctions advocate, puts the price even higher. He estimates that Pretoria has to spend \$2.3 billion a year above the world market price to obtain its oil covertly.

**The Swaziland connection:** With an economy tightly intertwined with South Africa's this tiny (population 800,000) mountain kingdom has become one of the key staging grounds for sanctions-busting.

But South Africa, not Swaziland, deserves the blame, say officials here who describe their efforts to stop sanctions-busting.

"If it claims to be Swazi, dump it in the sea," Swaziland's Commerce and Industry Secretary Chris Mkhonta told Canadian trade officials when they questioned him about a shipment of supposedly "made in Swaziland" wire. Mkhonta said Swaziland—which depends on South Africa for 80 percent of its imports and is in a customs union with Pretoria—opposes sanctions-busting because it "robs us, it takes away markets our genuine goods would have," he explained.

But Swazi officials cannot escape some blame for the activities of one of the region's most creative sanctions-busters, the Taiwanese Chia Ho group. Chia Ho sent South African-made shirts to the U.S. with "made in Swaziland" certification supplied by Mkhonta's ministry.

Though sanctions-busting is normally a secretive business, Chia Ho's conflicts with

bankers in New York, U.S. customs investigators in Rome and tax collectors in South Africa—all of whom believe they were cheated by the company—made it possible to obtain a rare look inside one company's system for evading sanctions.

Chia Ho devised its plan while Congress was debating the 1986 Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act (CAAA), which bans U.S. imports of South African textile products. Before CAAA, Chia Ho exported flannel shirts direct to the U.S. from a factory in South Africa's Kwazulu homeland. The company started preparing for sanctions in

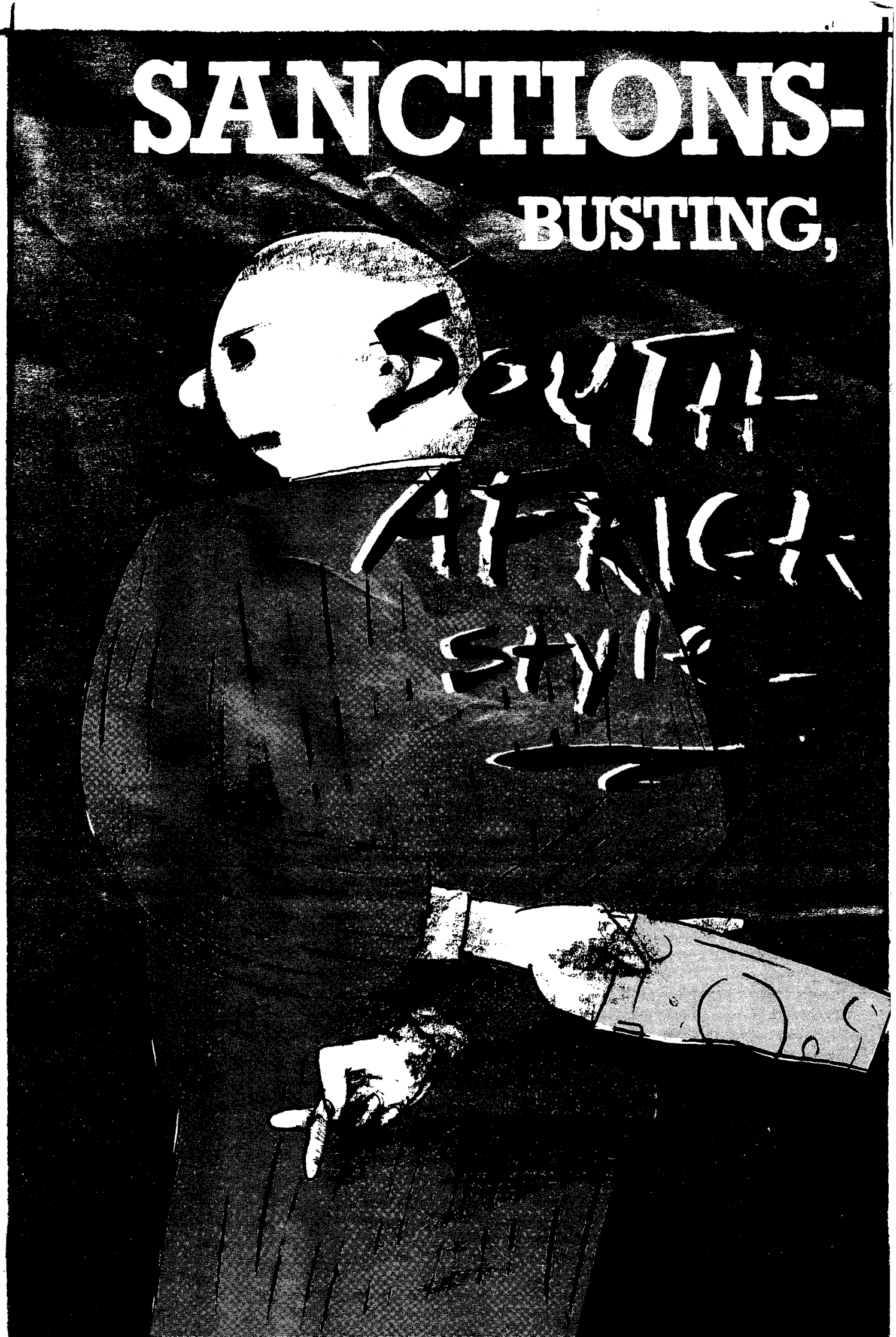
July 1986 by opening a factory here, Garment Industries of Swaziland.

After Congress approved CAAA in September, Chia Ho sent at least 140,000 South African-made flannel shirts to Swaziland from South Africa for relabelling, according to Krish Govendor, who was a foreman in the Swaziland plant. Other workers backed up that claim. "The bosses would bring shirts already made from Zululand and tell us to put the labels on," said sewing-machine operator Happiness Dhlamini. Truckers then carried the shirts, worth about \$400,000, back to Durban port to be

shipped to the U.S. as Swazi goods.

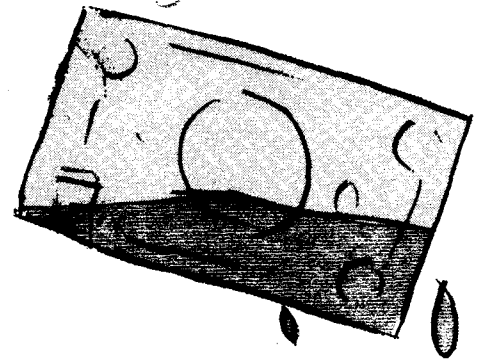
Former managers say this was only one of many mislabelled shipments. They believe the factory may have shipped up to \$600,000 a month worth of falsely labelled clothing during its one year of operation.

Sanctions-busting was part of an "extremely immoral" pattern of illegal operations, charged investment banker Michael Warman, who came here from New York last July to take over the factory and turn it into an exporter of genuine Swazi goods after Chia Ho defaulted on several million in loans from his New York-based





# The useful myth of U.S. dependence on "strategic minerals"



HARARE, ZIMBABWE - Jonas Savimbi's UNITA rebels use U.S.- and South African-supplied weapons to wreck Angola's Benguela railroad, the best export route for Zaire's strategically vital exports of cobalt to the U.S. With the Benguela shut, cobalt from Zaire leaves Africa through South African ports. Therefore, the U.S. depends on South Africa for cobalt and dares not impose strict anti-apartheid sanctions.

Convoluting logic like this lies behind the Reagan administration's most effective argument against strict sanctions: they would end access to the vital "strategic minerals."

Last year the State Department "certified" to Congress that the U.S. depends on South Africa for 10 minerals used in weapons manufacturing of other "strategic" industries. South African officials wield the strategic minerals list as an anti-sanctions club, threatening to cut off mineral supplies if the U.S. imposes strict sanctions in other areas.

South Africa's useful myth of U.S. dependence has, however, finally been exploded in a new study by one of southern Africa's leading mining experts. Minerals economist Paul Jourdan of Zimbabwe's Institute of Mining Research uses U.S. Bureau of Mines statistics to show that the Reagan administration claim about mineral dependence is so "blatantly ludicrous" that it "leads one to believe that the apartheid regime has significant support in the State Department."

If South African minerals were cut off tomorrow, the "extra cost to the U.S. of switching suppliers would be negligible" for all but two of the 10 minerals on the strategic list, Jourdan's study says.

Though the U.S. genuinely needs South Africa's chromium and platinum group metals, even this dependence can

soon be ended by helping South Africa's black-led neighbor, Zimbabwe, expand its production of both metals.

Two other key minerals—Zairian cobalt and Zimbabwean chrysotile asbestos—come from landlocked countries partly dependent on South African routes to the sea, Jourdan confirms. Yet existing railroads and ports in black-led nations can, Jourdan adds, handle exports to the U.S. Of course, he adds, the U.S. could make supplies more secure and reduce shipping costs by stopping its support for UNITA's violence against transport lines and by pressing South Africa to do the same.

Non-communist countries outside southern Africa are already the main suppliers for the remaining six minerals on the State Department list, and current suppliers can use existing capacity to replace all U.S. imports of these minerals from South Africa, Jourdan demonstrates.

In many cases—including industrial diamonds, manganese and titanium—a U.S. government genuinely interested in diversifying sources for key minerals would, Jourdan concludes, help black-led neighbors expand existing mines or develop well-researched deposits. Such "positive sanctions," he says, will help the nations hardest hit by Pretoria's destabilization while strengthening American security.

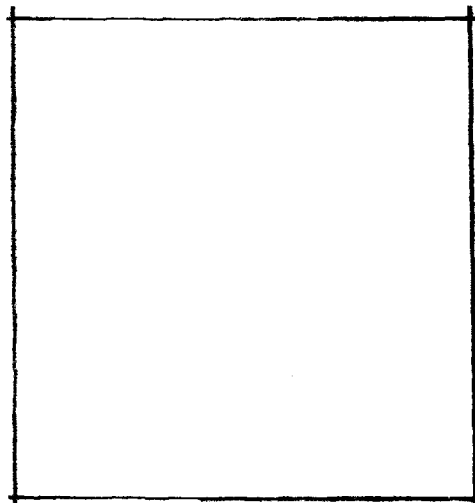
—S.A.

Eastbrook bank and the giant Citibank.

He said Chia Ho also sewed Swazi labels onto Taiwan-made goods barred from the U.S. by import quotas. Audit documents suggest Chia Ho may have even cheated the South African government by using Swaziland as a conduit for exporting money and machinery obtained under South African government programs designed to subsidize long-term capital investment.

Chia Ho officials—who apparently fled southern Africa to escape legal action—could not be reached for comment. But Warman's charges were supported by South African and Taiwanese diplomats, former Chia Ho employees and documents from the complex legal proceedings surrounding the company's flight from southern Africa.

Though Chia Ho is out of business, false labelling continues at other factories, said Warman. Exporters of genuinely Swazi garments face cutthroat competition from sanctions-busters who can produce more cheaply because they operate from South African bantustans, where labor costs are among the lowest in the world, he said.



**Seven other ways to bust sanctions:** Relabelling is one among many tactics in a sanctions-busting drive that also has at least seven other key elements. Some are "sanctions-busting" in the pure sense: covert violations of trade restrictions. Others are on the fringe of legality, and others still involve ingenious maneuvers to blunt the impact of sanctions without violating any law.

**1. Evading the arms embargo is the most secretive and, for Pretoria, the most important kind of sanctions-busting.** Though all U.N. members formally support an arms embargo imposed by the Security Council in 1977, violations remain widespread.

In a late 1986 undercover operation, nearly 60 tons of American machine guns, rocket launchers and other weapons were shipped to South Africa in violation of the CAAA and arms embargo, probably destined for UNITA in Angola, the London *Independent* revealed in an investigative report. At least 28 U.S. companies are currently under investigation for illegal exports to South Africa—and most of the cases involve arms, ammunition, airplanes, computers and other strategic goods—according to the U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO), the investigative arm of Congress.

A German state weapons firm used Turkish and Israeli intermediaries in a \$250 mil-

lion sale to South Africa of plans and components for four submarines and a strike command vessel after officially cancelling the deal, a West German parliamentary investigation recently revealed.

Furthermore, despite Israel's announcement of sanctions last year, Tel Aviv may be finding new ways to continue as South Africa's main collaborator in weapons development. The two countries have worked together on projects ranging from nuclear weapons to the latest water-cannon technology for assaulting protesters.

Israel banned new weapons deals with Pretoria after the U.S. Congress, in 1986, threatened to cut off military aid to arms-embargo violators. But Jane Hunter of *Israeli Foreign Affairs* reported recently "top Israeli officials have reassured the government in Pretoria that Israel will not suddenly disrupt the flow of goods and services with which the white regime kills and terrorizes its neighbors and black majority within its borders. They have simply cautioned Pretoria to keep a low profile."

The military junta in Chile has replaced Israel as the most open arms collaborator. Ignoring the arms embargo, Chile let Armscor, the South African arms parastatal, exhibit pilotless reconnaissance planes, air-to-air missiles and more than 100 other military products at a weapons show in Santiago in March.

**2. U.S. companies play a critical role in the drive to break the oil embargo.** More than half of South Africa's oil imports flow through refineries run by two U.S. companies, Mobil and Caltex, according to Rep. Wise. The balance comes from European firms that also have major U.S. operations: Royal Dutch/Shell, British Petroleum and Total.

Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, Iran and Brunei routinely send oil to South Africa—by roundabout routes—in Greek, British, U.S., West German and Singaporean tankers, according to the *Am-*

*Continued on page 22*

## U.S. and international sanctions against South Africa

Here's a breakdown of some of the major sanctions against South Africa:

### United Nations

• **1977 U.N. Security Council arms embargo on South Africa.** Prohibits the sale of arms to South Africa. This includes the sale of equipment and components for arms manufacturing, and the purchasing of arms from South Africa. The embargo also requests that nations refrain from inviting South Africa to participate in weapons and arms shows. (This request was violated by Chile this year).

• **1986 U.N. General Assembly oil embargo against South Africa.** This embargo is non-binding because it was not passed by the U.N. Security Council.

• **New resolutions** calling for sanctions against South Africa are expected to be introduced at the U.N.'s 43rd General Assembly in November.

### United States

• **The Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act (CAAA).** Passed by Congress in 1986, the CAAA calls for: a ban on the use of

the Krugerrand; prohibition on the sale of military articles; a ban on parastatal organizations; no computer exports to South Africa; no loans to the South African government; no air transport with South Africa; no new investments in South Africa; no nuclear trade with South Africa; no importation of South African agricultural products, food, sugar, textiles, coal, iron, steel or uranium; no cooperation with South African armed forces.

• **House Bill number HR1580.** Passed on August 11 by a House vote of 244-132, this legislation is scheduled for consideration by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on September 8.

It calls for the following new sanctions: a ban on all U.S. investments in South Africa, except for investments made by businesses that are 90 percent black-owned; bans on all imports, except for strategic minerals, publications and imports made by businesses that are 100 percent black-owned; a ban on all exports to South Africa, except for agri-

cultural commodities and products, publications and U.S. public and private assistance to victims of apartheid; a ban on new federal coal, gas and oil leases for U.S. subsidiaries or affiliates that are under the control of a foreign company and which, directly or through others, invest in exporting oil to the South African oil industry (this ban is aimed primarily at Shell, British Petroleum and Total); a ban on U.S. or U.S.-controlled ships transporting oil to South Africa; a ban on U.S. intelligence sharing with South Africa (except where Cuban troops or Communist forces are involved—the obvious example being Angola) and on military cooperation.

### European Community

• **The European Economic Community (EEC) Statement on South Africa.** Enacted in September 1986, this statement calls for: a ban on imports of South African iron and steel; a ban on South African gold coins; a ban on new investments in South Africa.

—compiled by Reece Pendleton



# EDITORIAL



## Two 1968 riots and how they are remembered

This year marks the 20th anniversary of two Chicago riots. Each had a major impact on both local and national politics, but only one has been receiving much attention. The first of the riots exploded on April 5, 1968, when news reached Chicago of Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination in Memphis. Ignored this year by the media and the left, the anniversary went almost unnoticed. The second took place during the 1968 Democratic National Convention—the famous Chicago police riot. That anniversary was widely commemorated last week.

The contrasts, both of the riots themselves and of their treatment by the media and the left, are striking. The convention demonstrations and police riot have not only been widely covered by the media, but were also the subject of an August 27-28 weekend conference in Chicago, attended by former leaders of the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), the peace movement and the Yippies—as well as an audience of young people eager to regain the spirit of the '60s (see David Moberg's report, page 24). Although there were a few critical comments by conference participants, by and large this was an exercise in wistful nostalgia, a time for aging radicals to celebrate their lost youth and militancy.

Like the media, many of the conference participants were more concerned with the attention they got at the time of the convention, and with the black eye given Chicago Mayor Richard Daley when his police went out of control, than with the impact of these events on the American people and the left itself. In fact, these demonstrations were an unmitigated disaster for which the left was in large part responsible.

The April riots had shocked Mayor Daley and led to his order—later rescinded under public pressure—that police shoot to kill arsonists and shoot to maim looters. By the summer, it was clear that Daley was determined at all costs to prevent demonstrations that might disrupt the convention he had brought to Chicago. Permits for parades and demonstrations were denied, but a small number of SDS leaders and Yippies went ahead with plans to confront Daley and the police. Knowing this, and fearing just such a debacle as later occurred, many other SDS and movement members chose to stay away from Chicago at convention time. But the hundreds who came were led into the fateful confrontation that presented the left as a band of crazies, more intent on disruption than participation in the political process.

For the movement these events were both a political defeat in themselves and a prelude to the emergence of the Weathermen as the final desperate act of self-destruction a year later. In 1968, SDS had some 50,000 members and the goodwill of millions of Americans opposed to the war. By the end of 1969, only a few hundred members remained thrashing about in the "days of rage," while the left in general and the

antiwar movement had lost all sense of direction. Of course, there were many other reasons for this development, but the '68 convention demonstrations contributed greatly to the process of disintegration.

The April riots were something else. In a spontaneous outflowing of rage and anguish following King's death, young black people smashed windows, burned and looted white businesses. Swarms of blacks swept down the main streets of Chicago's black communities while the police stood by helplessly. Then Mayor Daley called in 12,000 army troops and 6,000 National Guardsmen. In the end some 500 people were injured and nine, all black, were killed.

These riots changed Chicago in several ways, most importantly politically. Before '68 the black wards were the heart of the old Daley machine, but the riots—and especially Daley's reaction to them—spurred the small antimachine movement that eventually led to the 1983 election of Harold Washington as Chicago's first black mayor. In a sense, the riots, as a community expression of frustration and determination, acted as a declaration of political independence. In the long run this unpremeditated uprising of the black community served to strengthen it, despite the heavy toll it took in lives and property. In contrast, the calculated attempt to achieve similar results with the '68 convention demonstrations failed badly.

## EPA forced to take action on Jacksonville pollution

When *In These Times* ran Dick Russell's three-part series on Jacksonville, Ark. (March 9, 16 and 23), few people knew about the dioxin pollution that was killing Jacksonville residents, and no one but the victims seemed to care. The Vertac Chemical Company and its former owner, Dow Chemical, were doing their best to deny or ignore the situation. Arkansas Gov. Bill Clinton was looking the other way, and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was dragging its feet in deference to the corporate polluters.

But our story gave much-needed publicity to the situation and a boost to Patty Frase, the Jacksonville resident who leads the movement to get the EPA to live up to its mandate. Now, finally, six months after our expose, the EPA has tested a few residential sites in Jacksonville and found that dioxin pollution there ranges up to 80 parts per billion. It has offered relocation to four families, but still insists that the Love Canal and Times Beach sites in New York and Missouri are more heavily polluted. The evidence that we uncovered, however, strongly indicates that Jacksonville is at least as dangerous to its residents as were Love Canal and Times Beach. Patty Frase says (see page 4) the pollution affects at least 300 homes, all of which need to be evacuated. As she insists, this is only the beginning.

### IN THESE TIMES

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(ISSN 0160-5992)

Published 41 times a year: weekly except the first week of January, first week of March, last week of November, last week of December; bi-weekly in June through the first week in September by Institute for Public Affairs, 1300 W. Belmont, Chicago, IL 60657, (312) 472-5700

Member: Alternative Press Syndicate

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This issue (Vol. 12, No. 34) published Sept. 7, 1988, for newsstand sales Sept. 7-13, 1988.





# LETTERS

## Israeli-U.S. relations

I WOULD JUST LIKE TO SAY BRAVO TO *IN THESE TIMES* for its continuing courageous coverage of the Palestinian uprising and Israel's brutal repression. The recent articles and viewpoints by Diana Johnstone, Stephen Zunes, Rashid Khalidi and others, raise important and politically volatile questions about the enormous, unaudited U.S. financial and military support of the Israeli regime. Most publications on the left have, for the most part, chosen to report only the most heinous aspects of Palestinian oppression and have shied away from probing analyses of Israeli-U.S. and Israeli-Palestinian relations. I am glad to see that *In These Times* has chosen not to under-report this issue.

Michael Browne  
New York

## Drugs, urine and totalitarianism

AS A LEFT-WING LIBERTARIAN I WANT TO APPLAUD your editorials advocating the decriminalization of drugs in this country. We need more politicians like Baltimore Mayor Kurt Schmoke and Reps. Fortney Stark (D-CA) and Steny Hoyer (D-MD) who are willing to risk unpopular positions on this issue instead of emotional rhetoric from the likes of Rep. Charles Rangel.

It is fundamental to a free society that individuals make their own moral choices. To have laws against possessing a plant that grows from the ground is insane. I will not tolerate some vote-hungry "liberal" asking for tougher drug laws while at the same time saying capital punishment for sadistic murderers is wrong! The 1988 platform to the Socialist Party USA has the correct position: "Elimination of all laws that create crimes without victims. Substance-abuse is a medical and social problem for which police action is not the best solution."

I would suggest that Robert Whealey (Letters, July 20) vote the straight Piss-Tester Party (alias GOP) ticket if he is that concerned about enforcing more drug laws and subsequently establishing a totalitarian state.

Richard Clark  
Salem, Ind.

## Flesh out

DAVID MOBERG (*ITT*, AUG. 17) IS CORRECT. I BELIEVE, in arguing that relying on ecological principles rather than technological fixes will more likely result in sustainable agriculture. However, he ignores the prime threat to future food security—our reliance on flesh-centered diets.

Over 80 percent of the grain grown in the U.S. is fed to animals destined for slaughter, while 20 million people die annually due to hunger and its effects. Over half the U.S. land area is used for grazing and the production of feed crops for animals. Livestock agriculture also requires extensive energy, water, pesticides and fertilizer. Of the four million acres of cropland being lost to erosion each year (according to the U.S. Soil Conservation Service), over 85 percent is directly associated with the raising of livestock. The U.S. is the world's largest importer of beef, and it has been calculated that 55 acres of tropical rain forest are destroyed

to produce just one fast-food hamburger. In summary, livestock agriculture has tremendous negative effects on our resources and on our ecosystems and, next to nuclear war, is arguably the greatest threat to global survival.

Richard H. Schwartz  
Staten Island, N.Y.

## The "well-known" syndrome

TO THE SURPRISE OF ABSOLUTELY NO ONE, *IN THESE TIMES* endorsed Dukakis-Bentsen in its August 3 issue. Tell us, will we soon see a new organization? Democratic Socialists for Dukakis-Bentsen.

Some of your writers were uneasy. They had swallowed Jackson's rickety-rack about how he had made huge gains over 1984. And then Dukakis put him in his place, in the back of the party bus, and picked a contra veep. But who did Jackson—or *In These Times*—expect your lesser evil would pick? Mother Teresa?

A few questions: Would you have supported a Bentsen-Dukakis ticket? Why would you quibble over whether the contra murderer's name is on the right side of the hyphen or the left? Or whether the Arab-killer, which Dukakis surely is, had his name on the left side or the right?

You previously printed a letter in which I charged that the Democrats help murder Palestinians, and do so for campaign contributions from rich Jewish chauvinists. You do not dispute this well-known truth. Which leads to another speculative question: Would you tell readers to vote for Dukakis if he helped the PLO kill Jews in return for funds from Arabs?

This tells us something. Our lesser evilists are not necessarily subjective racists. But they are objectively. For them an Arab-killing presidential candidate is tolerable. Not a murderer of Nicaraguans. If Dukakis, an Arab-killer, gets elected, *ITT* will be happy. But if he killed Jews, *ITT* would never stop howling. Tell us, if you can, why it would be infamous to vote for a Jew-killer, but it is our civic duty to vote for a murderer of Palestinians?

You editorialize that the left is marginal if it stays out of the Democratic Party. Aren't you marginal within the party? You didn't want Dukakis or Bentsen. The left is marginal today in or out of the party. So is Jackson. Go on the street and ask blacks what he won the masses? Sure, a victorious Dukakis will throw us a bone. But the billionaires will stay rich and the poor will still be the poor.

So spare us bullshit about marginality.

All of us will lose. However people will say maybe Brenner was right, maybe wrong, certainly he is a socialist. But if you say you are leftists, folks gonna laugh 'til tears roll down their cheeks. Because no way would a leftie vote for an Arab-killer and a contra.

Lenni Brenner  
Berkeley, Calif.

**Editor's note:** *In These Times* has not endorsed Michael Dukakis. Even so, we hope he wins.

## His cup overfloweth

THANK YOU FOR REPORTING THAT THE NATIONAL Bureau of Standards has begun peddling freeze-dried urine (*ITT*, Aug. 17). Now my friends believe me when I tell them I earn a decent living peeing for the government. It's a neat job. Twice a week a team of us professional urinators get together, take a drug—cocaine or marijuana, depending on what the Bureau needs—drink a six-pack of diuretics, and then to work. We get \$10 a cup.

I am hoping to sign on with the Pentagon because they pay from \$400 to \$73,000 a cup, depending on the day of the week.

Some folks may think this work is demeaning, but what the hey, I'm a patriot, and the tree of liberty has to be watered with something.

We invite your readers to sign up and join the great American Ureanalysis.

David Everett  
Austin, Texas

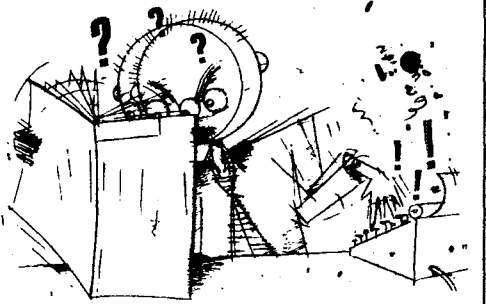
## Left moralism

TWO RECENT ARTICLES (*ITT*, JULY 20) ARE ILLUSTRATIVE of problems the American left faces when it comes to establishing its moral and intellectual credibility. "The day Puerto Rico won't forget" treats the notion of suspicion of the *Independentista* movement as absurd. Yet, I think discomfort with that movement is understandable. The pro-independence Nationalist Party was linked to a purported plot to assassinate President Truman, and members of that organization violently disrupted U.S. congressional proceedings. The pro-independence FALN is a notorious terrorist organization responsible for a number of incidents of terrorist killings. The Puerto Rican Socialist Party was, at least in the past, sycophantic in its devotion to Fidel Castro and the Cuban system. Now, obviously, this doesn't mean that all *Independentistas* are violent or anti-democratic in their orientation. I believe the Puerto Rican Independence Party is

neither. But it does suggest why the *Independentistas* might be viewed negatively. That may be guilt by association, but let's face it, that's how many opinions are formed and often those opinions are correct. Not to point this background out is its own form of oversimplification. It's reflective of the tendency of committed leftists to dismiss the worries of those who don't share their ideological commitment as baseless and silly, when in fact they are neither.

The comments by Sue Coe in "The passion of Sue Coe" are even more fascinating. Apparently she considers the ideas of the new right to be not simply wrong, but "utterly bizarre, the dreams of maniacs." Not only are right-wingers insane, they apparently don't really exist. Coe claims she's never really met one. She claims nonetheless (in spite of their apparent non-existence) that she really wants to meet them, even though their ideas are totally illogical. She wants to know how they think. (Interesting, because although she's never met one or actually read anything by them, she seems to know how they think. They're illogical and insane.) Nonetheless, your writer attributes depths of generosity to Coe. I don't think I'm being particularly unfair to Ms. Coe by suggesting that her comments are breathtakingly shallow, condescending (a condescension based on complete ignorance) and indicative of Coe's lack of knowledge of the U.S. and its people. What can one make of a person who claims to travel the country and meet scads of progressives but no one on the right. (I guess all those people who voted for Reagan are just a figment of my imagination.) If Coe is accurately portrayed in this article—let's hope not—she is a patronizing myopic snob completely out of touch with the fears and desires of most Americans. (No wonder people with strong religious convictions who help others are a mystery to her.)

John A. Kelleher  
Summit, N.J.



## SYLVIA

by Nicole Hollander





By Mitchell Kaidy

**S**INCE THE PALESTINIAN UPRISING, OR *intifada*, began, raids and confiscations of published news organs, as well as searches of newspaper offices and physical harassment of reporters, have become commonplace in the Occupied Territories.

At least 35 Palestinian journalists have been physically abused and jailed, their publications and press services shut down or severely restricted. But there has been virtually no news leaking out about the right-wing Shamir government's punitive turn against its own dissident press in Israel. Largely unreported is the fact that about eight left-wing Israeli journalists who have been critical of the government's policies in the West Bank and Gaza have been charged with crimes and their publications suspended.

Some news has filtered out about the repeated crackdowns against the Palestinian press, and the world has taken it in stride along with the everyday casualty reports. But such vaunted organs as the *New York Times* and the Associated Press—which are normally hypersensitive to censorship and media crackdowns—have not seen fit to mention Israel's increasingly antagonistic and abusive treatment of its own press.

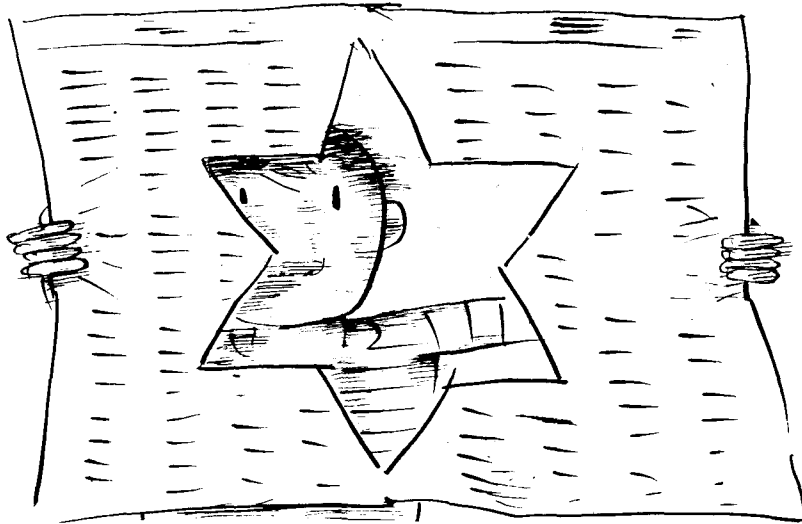
About a month ago, overriding Amnesty International's protests, Israel adopted a new tactic—deporting Palestinian journalists to Lebanon—thereby violating the Fourth Geneva Convention to which Israel is signatory, as well as violating Lebanon's sovereignty.

Long before the uprising the Palestinian press had been subjected to harassment and censorship, but the recent closures and Draconian crackdowns on what may currently be published represent a new phase in the government's attempts to prevent more information from getting out.

Under the old military censorship code, Arabic and English translations from the Israeli (Hebrew) press were not subject to review. Nor were most political cartoons. Now the translations, cartoons and photographs depicting confrontations between Palestinian civilians and Israeli soldiers almost never get past the censor.

Up to 90 percent of reports relating to the uprising are being blocked or severely altered, according to one editor of the West Bank daily *al-Sha'ab*. Striving to cope with the new restrictions, the editors are forced

## Israel is imposing a veil of silence on West Bank



to keep on hand a large pool of bland articles that are used as fillers following the censors' rejections of timely reports.

The word "martyr," commonly used by Palestinians to honor their dead, is prohibited. So is the Arabic for "fedayeen operations." Even though such operations may be against military occupiers and are sanctioned by international law, the censors substitute "terrorist operations."

**Arbitrary censorship:** Hatem Abdel Qadir accidentally learned how quirky and baffling military censorship can be. Through a mixup, Qadir, an editor of the Arabic-language *al-Fajr*, sent two copies of the same article for review. One article passed, the other was blocked.

Sources in the Occupied Territories said five of the nine members of the Arab Journalists Association's executive board are serving six-month administrative detentions. Such detentions, which are routinely placed against Palestinian journalists, have been denounced by Amnesty International.

The usefulness of such charges is that they need contain nothing specific, and they can be renewed without limit.

Also serving six-month detentions are the head of the Palestinian Writers Union, al-Mutawakel Taha, a poet, and Jamil al-Salhout, member of the administrative board and an editor of the monthly literary journal *al-Kateb*. A musician from a suburb of Jerusalem, Suhail Khouri, 25, was brought into a

military court in Lydda on a charge he made a recording hailing the Palestinian uprising. The *al-Fajr* weekly of Jerusalem reported that Khouri could face up to 10 years in jail.

Unspecified charges based on secret information were lodged against Samir Abu Jundi, a member of *al-Fajr* Arabic daily's news staff, who was held initially in Gaza, then transferred to the Ansar 3 detention center in the Naqab district.

Palestinian journalists who complained of being beaten included three women, two of whom were arrested. *Al-Bayader Assiyasi* magazine published an article in July re-

### Palestinian press services and publications have systematically been shut down.

porting that Nada Khazmo, the pregnant wife of the magazine's publisher, Jack Khazmo, was on assignment in Jerusalem when police arrested her and beat her so badly she suffered a miscarriage. She was later released on \$1,000 bail.

Another woman Palestinian journalist, Amineh Nimr, who lives in the Dheisheh refugee camp, was roughed up, arrested and held in detention for two days after a women's demonstration at the camp. Fatena Zughayyer of the West Bank weekly *al-Taili'a* was beaten by a soldier during a demonstration in Bethlehem and held in jail for two days before being released.

Palestinian Muhammed Zahayka of the Arabic edition of *al-Fajr* holds the dubious distinction of having been beaten twice by soldiers while covering events that had not been officially proscribed. Zahayka was first beaten and arrested for covering a West Bank demonstration, then was beaten again while covering an East Jerusalem disturbance last spring.

In an affidavit circulated by Amnesty International, Palestinian Ribhi al-Aruri reported he was beaten and kicked for an hour after his arrest, handcuffed with a sack over his head, interrogated for days while deprived of sleep and food and placed finally in a "cupboard" that permits only standing. Al-Aruri declared that he was later subjected to the cupboard treatment for

two days without food.

An Arabic editor of the Hebrew/Arabic newspaper *Derech Nanitzotz* (*Tariq al-Sharara*), whose Israeli editors were also arrested and remain in jail, al-Aruri has been adopted as a prisoner of conscience by Amnesty International.

The Israeli newspaper *Ha'Aretz* published an article about the four jailed Israeli and Palestinian editors, reporting that they tried but failed to get an explanation of the charges against them. When the authorities broke into the newspaper's offices, they found that the bilingual newspaper had installed a computer and was selling news reports about the Palestinian uprising to foreign countries.

The left-wing Alternative Information Center in Israel, which was raided last year, is still closed, and its director, Michael Warshawsky, remains in jail awaiting trial. Initially the police charged the center with being a "terrorist front," but later the charge was amended to providing typing services to groups allegedly linked to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

**Veil of silence:** Censorship, harassment and arrests of Palestinian journalists by Israel obliquely made it into the U.S. press recently when an American unit of the writers group PEN wrote Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir rebuking Israel over the journalist's arrests, the *New York Times* reported. They also asked him to reopen the shuttered Palestine Press Service, which U.S. television networks had praised and relied on for accuracy.

But when the Palestine Press Service as well as the Gaza Press Service were shut down, the American media, which had valued them, ignored the events. Noteworthy because it cited "censorship of poetry, books, school reading materials and literary texts" by Israel, the *New York Times* article estimated the number of arrested Palestinian journalists at between 25 and 35, but made no mention of arrested Israeli journalists.

A tardy and timid protest against Israeli censorship and harassment of the media emanated from the U.S. State Department last spring, but this, too, went unreported by the American media. The single protest invites comparisons with the incessant denunciations by the Reagan administration of Nicaragua's temporary shutdown of the newspaper *La Prensa* and limited censorship instituted by the struggling Nicaraguan government. Members of both Congress and the administration, as well as the mainstream press, have beaten this theme like a drum in denouncing the left-wing Sandinistas. But if criticism has been uttered about the U.S. allies, the democratic Israelis, it has wafted into the break in the ozone layer.

Bob Simon, CBS bureau chief in Israel, summed up Israel's success in bottling up information about the Palestinian uprising. In an article in the English-language Israeli magazine *New Outlook*, Simon was quoted as saying: "To a large extent they [the military] are successful, and that is why a great deal of what is going on is not being shown even by the foreign networks. What we do get on the screen is only the tip of the iceberg."

**Mitchell Kaidy**, a journalist who has worked for three daily newspapers and a television station in New York, has a special interest in the Middle East.

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By Jerold M. Starr

**A**S ANY MEDIA WATCHER KNOWS, THE Vietnam War is "hot." Movies, TV shows, paperbacks, magazines and even comic books on the war are doing a booming business.

Less visible but more significant is the growing movement to teach the Vietnam War in the schools. A survey by George Mason University's Center for the Study of the Vietnam Generation found 414 college-level courses being taught on "the '60s." The Vietnam War is covered in 347 and is the principal subject in 220. Faculty report that 58 percent of these have higher than normal enrollments; only 6 percent lower than normal. Some of these courses are drawing huge numbers. At Santa Barbara, Walter Capps regularly admits 900 students and turns away 600. At Stony Brook Ted Kennedy enrolls 500 students a year.

Attention to the Vietnam War has been building through the decade. Dedicated in 1982, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial quickly became the most popular monument in the nation's capital. Sandie Fauriol, the leading fundraiser for the memorial, reflects that the memorial is a symbol that allows "more people to accept Vietnam as a topic of study and to talk about it."

In 1983 more than 200 colleges and universities licensed tapes of the Public Broadcasting System's 13-part Vietnam television history for use in the classroom. The recommended course book, Stanley Karnow's *Vietnam: A History*, sold 200,000 copies in hard cover and 150,000 in paperback over 1983-85.

In 1985 newspapers across the country ran features to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the end of the war. *Newsweek* devoted a special issue to the subject. References to Vietnam increased along with coverage of the Reagan administration's policy of funding the contras to overthrow the government of Nicaragua. Secretary of State George Shultz made the link explicit: "Vietnam and Central America—I want to tackle this analogy head-on: Our goals in Central America are like those we had in Vietnam: democracy, economic progress and security against aggression. Broken promises. Communist dictatorship. Refugees. Widened Soviet influence, this time near our very borders. Here is your parallel between Vietnam and Central America."

**The Vietnam void:** That same month, Texas high school senior Beth Bowles spoke for many of her generation when she told a *Dallas Times Herald* reporter, "I keep hearing people say Central America is just like Vietnam. How am I supposed to know if Nicaragua is like Vietnam if I don't know what Vietnam was like?"

Many students have deep personal motives for searching out this history. They are the sons and daughters, nephews and nieces of those who served in Vietnam. I introduced a course on the war at West Virginia University in fall 1987. Half of the 30 students in the course had a close family member who was a Vietnam veteran. Eight of those 15 relatives had refused ever to discuss it. One of my students told the school paper, "Both my dad and my uncles were glad that someone was teaching a class in [the war] because they didn't want to talk about their experience, but they wanted me to know." Kennedy reports that some of his students at Stony Brook even brought their parents to class.

## A generation doesn't know what Vietnam was like



In recent years many veterans have themselves developed a need to discuss their experiences with young people—those now their age when they were sent to fight in Vietnam. They have organized bureaus to speak in the schools. In San Francisco there is a Veterans Speakers Alliance, in Minneapolis a group of Veterans for Life, in New York and New Jersey chapters of Vietnam Veterans United to Prevent World War III. Veterans for Peace, Inc., has members in eight states.

To be sure, veteran speakers have differed in their political assessments of the war. When they get to the nitty-gritty, however, the reality they depict quickly dispels the students' Hollywood illusions. In Dallas, former Green Beret Dan Giesel tells students, "There's nothing romantic about killing other people, and there's nothing adventurous about seeing friends killed or being shot at yourself." In Burtonville, Md., Ray Frappolli tells students Rambo is a "cartoon." On Long Island, Frank Campaigne tells students "what it was like to live in the jungle, to get into firefights, to get wounded. At the least," Campaigne advises, "I dispel their romantic notions about war."

**High schools:** While these developments are heartening, most high schools still ignore the Vietnam War. Secondary school textbooks barely mention it. For example, students at the Bronx High School of Science use a text that devotes three pages to Vietnam from the '50s to 1975. The world history book used by Dallas, Texas, high schools contains only six paragraphs on the war.

When I became concerned about this problem late in 1982, I conducted a computerized search through social studies clearinghouses for supplementary teaching materials on the Vietnam War. I came up empty. Through conversations with leading educators, I became convinced that this lack of materials was the principal obstacle to more teaching on the subject.

In 1984 I established the Center for Social Studies Education in order to produce a curriculum on the Vietnam War for schools. Over time, almost 200 Vietnam War scholars, teachers and veterans rallied to the challenge. Most volunteered their services. Material costs were subsidized by the Christo-

pher Reynolds Foundation, Unitarian Church and eight other charitable organizations. Participants varied greatly in social background and political orientation. However, we were agreed that this country could not afford another Vietnam War and that an active and informed citizenry was our best protection.

Our cause was given a boost near the end of 1986 when a viewer's guide for an NBC-TV drama on *Agent Orange* gave us a plug. We received requests for the curriculum from more than 500 teachers in 48 states. The following year I edited a special issue on "Teaching the Vietnam War" for *Social Education*, the official journal of the National Council for the Social Studies. In January the issue went out to more than 25,000 social studies teachers across the country and brought forth hundreds of pre-publication orders.

Mindful of the time and money constraints faced by most teachers, we designed the curriculum's format to minimize cost and maximize flexibility. Our "modular textbook" consists of a dozen 32-page units that snap into a three-ring binder. Each unit covers a different topic so teachers can select materials to fit any course option. The individ-

ual modules can be purchased separately. A 64-page teacher's manual includes projects, extension activities with reproducible sheets and annotated resource guides never available to teachers before.

All units include historical photographs, editorial cartoons, instructional graphics and a variety of primary source materials (e.g., diary entries, letters home, G.I. poetry, etc.) whose purpose it is to humanize the events and consequences of the war in ways that go beyond conventional narrative accounts.

While we consider the "grunt level" perspective important, our learning objectives are much broader. We seek in this curriculum to teach students how to think critically about conflict resolution alternatives in international relations, reason ethically about difficult moral choices and better understand people from other social backgrounds and cultures. All materials were reviewed and field tested extensively to ensure that they were factually correct and appropriate for the classroom.

In recent months, several national news stories have discussed the book. Educational, veterans and peace journals have requested copies to review. Most importantly, orders have been rolling in. At the present rate, our first printing of 3,000 copies—large by global education standards—will be sold out within the first year of publication. A larger second printing is certain. Also planned is a nationwide program of workshops to show teachers how to use the materials effectively.

The book is being used at several colleges and universities. However, we are most proud of its widespread adoption at the high school level. Some systems already are planning a significant expansion of their teaching of the Vietnam War, based on our materials.

We still have a very long way to go. A 1985 *Washington Post/ABC News* poll found that 57 percent of the American public did not have "a clear idea of what the war was about"; almost a third didn't even know which side the U.S. supported. Those now teaching the war report their students come in not even being able to find Vietnam on the map. However, for those of us who would rather light a candle than curse the darkness, this mission is filled with hope.

Jerold M. Starr teaches at West Virginia University.



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By Nina Burleigh

IN HIS 1970 BOOK ON THE MISS AMERICA pageant, sportswriter Frank Deford noted that one of the pageant's promoters' greatest fears during the radical '60s was that a nasty protester would infiltrate their wholesome pageant as a spy and saboteur. It never happened.

Twenty years later, however, Californian Michelle Anderson—a babe in arms when the moniker “bra burners” was coined for women who torched their underwires on the Atlantic City Boardwalk in 1968—made the pageanters' worst nightmare come true.

Anderson, a 21-year-old community studies student at the University of California Santa Cruz, doesn't normally wear makeup or “fu-fu” her hair, but she remade herself for a three-month odyssey into pageant culture. As a beauty spy, she entered psychologically harrowing waters. After several visits to makeup specialists, she says, “I looked in the mirror and I didn't even recognize myself.” She endured “walking lessons” and was asked to drop out of college temporarily to prepare for the “scholarship pageant.” Onstage at the Miss California pageant in June, she ended the charade by unfurling a banner that read “Pageants Hurt All Women,” and was hauled off stage shouting that the winner was “anorexically thin.”

Anderson's exploit comes at a time when such theatrical forays have become rare, and the feminist movement is seen by many as in decline. While more women are working than ever before, they are paid between 30 and 40 percent less than men for the same work. They do not have equal rights under the law, and female objectification continues unabated via pageanters, pornographers and the fashion industry.

Beauty contests like the Miss America pageant continue to draw a staggering number of young women. Last year 80,000 competed around the nation in the Miss America contest system, and it is estimated that a quarter of a million women annually compete in the myriad commercial beauty pageants, the best-known of which is the Miss Universe pageant. Psychologist Rita Freedman has noted that contests are modern manifestations of the Cinderella transformation route to female power—a brand of power based on weakening props like high heels and makeup, and the ephemeral quality of physical beauty that is not genuine.

**California schemin':** Anderson says she was inspired to protest by “a proud and longstanding tradition of protest against pageants in Santa Cruz.” She met the feminist protest group Media Watch in 1987 and got her spy project off the ground last year when she first entered the Miss



There she is: Michelle Anderson shrieks in mock delight as she is crowned Miss Santa Cruz.

## Pageant beauty spy dons crown of scorns

Santa Cruz pageant. She won in 1988 and went on to the Miss California contest. “I was very proud to be representing the Santa Cruz women and their sentiments about pageants,” she says.

Anderson got her anti-pageant grooming from Media Watch, headed by former *Sports Illustrated* swimsuit cover girl Anne Simon-ton—whose experience as a gang-rape victim in New York City in the '70s molded her stance against media objectification of women. Media Watch and its predecessor organizations have been responsible for nine consecutive years of civil disobedience against the Miss California beauty pageant. The group takes credit for pushing the Miss California pageant out of Santa Cruz to new headquarters in more politically hospitable San Diego.

In the past Santa Cruz protesters have thrown blood outside pageant halls to dramatize what they say is a direct connection between pageantry and violence against women. They have also been arrested for going topless outside pageant convention halls and delivering ribbon-wrapped meat to judges or throwing such packages on pageant stages during swimsuit competitions.

Santa Cruz pageant protesters are the most active of such groups nationwide. Simon-ton travels around the country talking to college students about pageant protests, and recently organized a successful protest in Boulder, Colo. But other women's groups around the country

are less concerned with pageants than they were in the '60s, when a more focussed feminist movement put forward a clear message that pageantry objectifies and depersonalizes women.

**Hard to swallow:** Today's protesters make more radical charges. First they say that pageantry is one end of a continuum of “trafficking in women” that includes pornography and violence against women at its worst. They also link pageantry with false image-making that does psychological damage to women and leads to eating disorders.

Certainly, the winners of the pageants work hard to mold themselves to fit a stringent physical ideal. Mar-lise Ricardos, the young woman who

### Protesters claim pageants do untold mental and physical harm.

was crowned Miss California the night Anderson staged her protest, is a Latina, but you can't tell that from looking at her. She has dyed her hair from brown to red to blonde, wears blue contact lenses and lost 20 pounds in the few weeks before the pageant to please judges. A previous Miss California reportedly underwent extensive plastic surgery, and there is even a plastic surgeon serving as a consultant to the pageant in San Diego. Although Anderson said she didn't meet any women who were obviously anorexic or

bulimic among the queens, she said the winner of the pageant “just didn't eat, even when she wanted to.”

After she won the Miss Santa Cruz title this year, Anderson says, “People around here really thought I had a chance.” A cadre of pageant volunteers—there are 300,000 of them nationwide—advised her on hair, “best colors” and where to lose weight. They even shopped for her ward-

### SPECTACLE

robe, outfitting her in “playclothes with plastic earrings that matched” for her week in San Diego at the Miss California pageant. Anderson said she doesn't know “why the hell they're so dedicated,” but she surmised that the volunteer women pageant officials have adopted the theory that power comes from a beauty standard, and as they age they want to be engaged in enforcing that standard.

Anderson credits her success in the queen world with long study of the image. “I studied the Miss America look, which most of the local people don't study. I spent a couple of months studying it.” Integral to preparing for the pageant, she said, was reading *Becoming a Beauty Queen*, by two sister queens from the Midwest, Polly Peterson Boyle and Barbara Peterson Burwell. “It's a scream,” Anderson said. “They even condone cosmetic surgery.”

Through study, she realized that only women wearing expensive “glitter gowns” dripping with sequins or beads win evening gown competitions, even though Miss America pageant Executive Director Leonard Horn says the contestants spend no more than \$1,500 during their odysseys from small town to Atlantic City. But Anderson maintains that contestants spend thousands of dollars on clothes, haircuts, tanning salons, makeup consultants and other preparations.

In her queen days, Anderson learned “how to fu-fu my hair,” and entirely transformed her face with the help of paid makeup specialists. Some of the transformation work came naturally, she says. “When I was in junior high school, I think like most young girls, I picked up on all the tricks from the fashion magazines.”

**Walking that walk:** One of the most difficult parts of her “training” was learning the Miss America “walk.” Anderson said the contestants who make it to the Miss California televised state pageant are trained to walk in a certain way that looks good on TV but “is amazingly impossible to do, extremely unnatural.”

The walk begins with a pose. Anderson reels it off rote: “Chin up, shoulders back, breasts up, tummy sucked in, butt sucked under, legs gracefully poised, arms straight at your sides, hands facing thighs, fingers slightly curved into thighs, not touching the thighs but not more

than about two inches away. As you move, gracefully swing your arms back and forth. You're jutting your whole front out, tucking your butt under and trying to walk. As you walk, your legs have to cross slightly and toes have to be pointed slightly out. Your heels must be following a straight line. Remember, you're in four-inch heels. And smile naturally while doing it.”

Anderson was also asked to make another unnatural adjustment: in the “scholarship pageant” she was asked to take three months off school to work on becoming an image that she says is soulless and personless. “I was floored. We were at a preliminary rendezvous—before the Miss California pageant—and state pageant officials got up and said to us that if we were not willing to give up our personal identity to become the image, then to get out.”

Veteran Santa Cruz pageant protester Nikki Craft said of Anderson, “As far as I'm concerned, Michelle Anderson is the only woman who has ever represented us. She is still Miss Santa Cruz as far as I'm concerned.” But California pageant officials take a different view: within a week of her on-stage protest, Santa Cruz pageant volunteers privately selected a new local queen.

Now that she's washed out, the hairspray, peeled off the face powder and returned her fingernails to a color found in nature, Michelle Anderson has become something of a feminist heroine. She's been interviewed in *People* magazine, her name was flashed across the country on the news wires and she has been asked to speak to the California chapter of the National Organization for Women. She plans to write a book about her exploits as a spy queen.

Deep down, Anderson is just a regular young woman. She lives the life of a college student but is a little overwhelmed by the media attention she's garnered. She grew up on military bases around the country, and says her parents backed her spy mission all the way. “All you have to do is sit through one contest to get disgusted,” she says of the way she gained the moral support of her more conservative brother.

On September 10 another herd of 50 regular young women, who've traded their old selves for new, improved, transformed versions, will parade on network television before millions of Americans. Young women and girls will be among that audience, learning by televised example the Cinderella power myth that is the lot of their sex. They will watch as a commercially beautified woman—once just like them—demurely sheds tears at her victory. Like the tiara she'll wear, the tears sparkle and attract, and are a tribute to the special, female triumph based on a standard of physical attractiveness that teeters on high heels. ■

Nina Burleigh is a Chicago-based freelance writer.



By Susan J. Douglas

# Flex appeal, buns of steel and the body in question

IN THE SUMMER, THE ONSLAUGHT HITS its peak. Everywhere we look, in the incessant get-back-in-shape TV ads and magazine articles, on billboards, in the catalogues that jam our mailboxes and in the endless diet soda and cereal ads, the perfectly smooth, toned buttocks and thighs of models and actresses accost the women of America. They jut out at us from high-cut bathing suits and exercise outfits, challenging us and humbling us, reminding all women that nothing in the world is more repulsive and shameful than "orange peel skin." They insist that the rest of us should feel only one thing when we put on a bathing suit: profound mortification.

Sure, we're seeing more female biceps, and every few months the *New York Times* asserts that breasts are back "in." But still, it is the slim, dimple-free buttock and thigh that has become, in the '80s, the ultimate signifier of female fitness and beauty. Trim, smug models are positioned with their knees bent or their bodies curled so that their superhuman hindquarters are front and center.

And not just in *Vogue* or *Cosmo*, either: even the *Village Voice*, in between the exposes on racism and government malfeasance, has ads for products such as the videotape called *Buns of Steel*, which promises that "Now you can have the buns you've always wanted." Why this part of the body, and why now?

Emphasis on the thigh stems in part from the fitness craze of the past 15 years, when many women discovered the physical and psychic benefits of exercise. The craze began as an oppositional, even radical reaction against the degradation of food by huge conglomerates, and the work routines and convenience technologies that encourage consumption and passivity. The organic health-food movement was, initially, at its core, anticapitalist. But one of capitalism's great strengths—perhaps its greatest—is its ability to co-opt and domesticate opposition, to transubstantiate criticism into a host of new, marketable products. And so it was with fitness.

**Out on a limb:** Corporations saw immediately that there was gold in them thar thighs. The key to huge profits was to emphasize beauty over health, sexuality over fitness, and to equate thin thighs with wealth and status. What had worked so well in the past was to set standards of beauty that are simultaneously unattainable and seemingly within reach if only the right product is purchased.

Yet there is much more going on here than that old gambit. The flawless rump has become the female body part of the '80s because its cultivation and display fits in so well with the great myth of Reaganism: that superficial appearances can be equated with a person's deepest character strengths and weaknesses.

Just listen to what Cher tells us in all those health spa ads: thin thighs

and dimple-free buttocks are now instant, automatic evidence of female discipline, restraint and control. They are indicators of a woman's potential for success. Any woman,

## FITNESS

so the message goes, can achieve perfect thighs through concentrated effort, self-denial and deferred gratification, the basic tenets of the work ethic.

**Work-ethic workout:** All she has to do is apply herself and, of course, be a discriminating, upscale consumer. "You don't get this far by accident," proclaims one sneaker ad displaying a tight, toned rump. "You've worked hard." Another magazine ad, this one for a spa that also foregrounds a machine-tooled hindquarter, intones, "When you work at it, it shows." Meaning, if you've been slacking off, that will show, too.

It doesn't matter if you're healthy, exercise regularly and aren't overweight. If wearing one of the new, ultra-high-cut bathing suits would reveal too much roundness, a little fat (what the cosmetics industry calls "cellulite"), the offending woman can be dismissed as slothful and lacking moral fiber. No matter that the female hip area is naturally more fatty than the male's (a function of reproduction), or that most women's jobs require constant sitting, two factors that tend to work against developing buns of steel.

A real woman, whatever her age, will get off her butt and, by overcoming her sloth, not just get in shape, but conquer genetics and history. Her buns of steel will instantly identify her as someone who subscribes to the new yuppie work ethic, which insists that even in leisure hours, the truly tough, the truly deserving, never stop working. The sleek, smooth, tight butt is a badge, a medal asserting that anal compulsiveness is an unalloyed virtue.

Perfect thighs, in other words, are an achievement, a product, and one to be admired and envied. They signify that the woman has made something of herself, that she has character and class, that she is the master of her body and, thus, of her fate. If she has conquered her own adipose tissue, she can conquer anything. Narcissism equals liberation.

She is a new woman, liberated and in control. She has made her buttocks less fatty, more muscular, more, well...like a man's. So here we have a variation on one of the media's most popular—and pernicious—distortions of feminism: that ambitious women want, or should want, to be just like men, especially those men committed to the most competitive, inhumane, macho as-

pects of patriarchy. The woman whose upper thigh best approximates a fat-free male hindquarter is the woman most entitled to enjoy the same privileges as men.

These overworked thighs also suggest that women can compete with men while simultaneously increasing their own desirability. Thighs, rather than breasts, have become the focus in the '80s because presumably everyone, the flat-chested and the stacked, men and women, can work toward buns of steel. Women can develop the very same anatomical zones that men do, giving their muscles new definition, a definition that is meant to serve simultaneously as a warning and an enticement to men. Female buns of steel mark a woman as a desirable piece of ass, yet someone who can also kick ass when necessary.

**Kid stuff:** What makes these thighs desirable is that, while they're fat-free, like men's, they are also the thighs of adolescent girls. The ideal rump—like Lisa Bonet's, recently displayed on the cover of *Rolling Stone*—bears none of the marks of

age, responsibility, work or motherhood. And the crotch-splitting, cut-up-to-the-waistline, impossible-to-swim-in bathing suits featured in such publications as the *Sports Illustrated* "swimsuit issue" can never reveal that other marker of adulthood, pubic hair. So, beneath the guise of female fitness and empowerment lies an infantile ideal that helps keep women in their place.

Aside from the impossible standards of perfection they impose, these buns of steel urge women to be all things to all people: to be

**In real life, straddling such monumental contradictions—even on toned, fat-free muscular legs—is impossible and preposterous.**

ceaseless, competitive workaholics and sex objects, to be active workers in control of their bodies and passive ornaments for the pleasure of men, to be hard-as-nails superwomen and vulnerable, unthreatening, teen-aged beach bunnies. Straddling such contradictions, even on toned, fat-free, muscular legs is, in real life, impossible and preposterous.

And buns of steel are meant to separate the truly classy, deserving women from the rest of the lumpy female proletariat. Buns of steel, like a Pierre Cardin label, are a mark of well-earned exclusivity. Lumpy thighs have been cast as K-mart thighs, not the thighs of Rodeo Drive. **A leg to stand on:** So where do these buttocks and thighs leave the rest of us, the real women of America who sit at desks or stand at sinks, who are over 16 and who don't have the time, money, personal trainer or surgical team to help us forge our own buns of steel? Even non-overweight women and women who should know better have been worked over so well that whenever we look at ourselves in the mirror or, worse, have to be seen in public in a bathing suit, all we can feel is disgust and shame.

But it isn't just a shame of our bodies. Buns of steel have taught us to be ashamed of the way we live our day-to-day lives; of the fact that whatever we're doing, we aren't working hard enough; that we don't have that badge of entitlement; that we don't really have enough self-respect; that we aren't enough like men; and, worst of all, that we're adult females in a culture that still prefers, by and large, little girls.

I'm tired of being told never to stop, and that some physical exertion, like pumping a Nautilus machine, is more valuable than other exertion, such as chasing a two-year-old. I'm tired of Cher's rump, Christie Brinkley's thighs and countless other starved, airbrushed, surgically enhanced hindquarters being shoved in my face.

I'm tired of being told that if I just exercise a lot more and eat a lot less, I, too, can conquer biology, make my thighs less female and thus not be eyed with derision. I'm *real* tired of the Marquis-de-Sade, split-'em-in-two "bathing suits" foisted on us by the fashion industry. Most of all, I'm tired of the endless self-flagellation we women subject ourselves to because of the way this latest, unattainable physical ideal has been combined with the yuppie work ethic.

It is time for women to reclaim the fitness movement from Kellogg's, Diet Pepsi, Biotherm and all the rest of the buttocks and thighs cartel. Buns of steel are not about fitness: they are about pretending that some anorexic, unnatural, corporate-constructed ideal is really a norm. Buns of steel are designed to humiliate women and, worse yet, to make us complicit in our own degradation.

**Susan J. Douglas**, a frequent contributor to *In These Times*, teaches at Hampshire College.





## Power and Culture: Essays on the American Working Class

By Herbert G. Gutman  
Edited by Ira Berlin  
Pantheon, 452 pp., \$29.95

By Dana Frank

## Gutman's legacy: working with class

**H**ERBERT GUTMAN WAS THE FEISTY center of much of the American labor history research that flourished in the '70s and early '80s. It wasn't just that he established many of the basic tenets of what we now take for granted as "working-class history," it was also his personality. For the "new" labor historians, many of them out of the Ivy League, Gutman's man-of-the-streets, pugnacious, generous persona as much as his work seemed to promise an engagement with the

real American working class.

But then Gutman suddenly died in 1985, at the age of 56. In this posthumous collection, Ira Berlin, his collaborator, has gathered a selection of Gutman's unpublished essays spanning the '50s through the early '80s, together with a sampling of Gutman's less accessible published work.

*Power and Culture* is definitely not a gripping read; nor does it contain any surprises as to where Gutman's thinking was leading in his last years. But for anyone curious about the roots and development of labor or

black history in the last 30 years, Berlin's splendid 65-page introduction, combined with a not overly assiduous sampling of the essays (try not to feel guilty while skimming), provides one of the best introductions available. Reading this book is like a "you are there" series in which you get to relive many of the biggest contests in which radical historians of the '60s fought liberalism on the terrain of 19th-century U.S. history.

### Gutman the dragon-slayer:

Perhaps most striking on reading this collection is the extent to which Gutman constructed his theories as much out of reaction as out of radical offensive. Beginning in graduate school at Columbia and then Wisconsin in the '50s, Gutman set out to slay one by one the evil demons of mainstream history. In *Power and Culture* you can almost feel Gutman's seething outrage at the offensive premises of his opponents and his infectious faith in meticulous historical research as the weapon with which to sally forth.

The first demon was the complacent "consensus" rendition of U.S. history enshrined in American universities in the '50s. Gutman, the New York Jewish son of a druggist, having just passed through the Communist Party, had no truck with such an American history with the conflict omitted. As the first four essays in this collection make clear, Gutman's original—and still strongest—contribution to U.S. history was his documentation of "the workers' search for power."

Gilded Age workers, he contested, were not all acquiescent admirers of that era's inevitably superior industrial magnates. Quite the contrary: from the evolving social structure of industrial cities and towns sprang a thriving independent cultural critique of ascendant industrialism. The workers weren't, moreover, powerless. Above all, they were agents of their own history.

The middle third of the book excerpts Gutman's successive demolitions of many of the most offensive historical theories to rise up in the '60s; first, and foremost, Daniel Patrick Moynihan's 1965 noxious indictment of "black matriarchy" as the supposed cause of black poverty. Gutman responded, 11 years later, with *The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom*. Tracing Afro-American naming practices and kin networks across generations of slaves and freedpeople, Gutman showed the strong ties of kin and community that bound black people together in the 19th century.

In these same years Gutman took on Oscar Handlin's assertion of im-

migrant family "breakdown" and Robert Fogel and Stanley Engerman's quantitative hocus-pocus on slave efficiency, *Time on the Cross*. In all his work from this period he extended his theories of working-class agency and cultural independence to blacks and immigrants. All turned to self-help; all built an effective culture of opposition deep within communities of the supposedly "powerless."

The best glimpses of Gutman in all his glory come at the book's end. In a 1983 interview reprinted from *Radical History Review*, Gutman expands on 19th-century working-class history, makes explicit his

## HISTORY

quarrels with, and uses of, Marxism and here, as elsewhere, calls for a new "synthesis" of working-class and U.S. history.

Then in the collection's last piece, "Historical Consciousness in Contemporary America," Gutman really shines. It's not just that he articulates so eloquently the collective and individualistic meanings of "independence" in American history. It's the vigor and clarity with which he exposes the individualistic premises of mass-media historical whitewashes such as *Roots*. Here he is one last time using his thorough faith in working-class agency and vision to slay the dragons of mainstream history.

### The labor historians' search for power:

Gutman's own story is different, however, from that of the generation of students—in the broadest sense—whose work in labor history bloomed under his tutelage in the '70s and '80s. Gutman was at the core of a culture other than the one he researched: the culture of labor history.

Part of the difference lay precisely in Gutman's success. By 1975 he was considered one of the top historians in the U.S. The demons shrank back; studies of working-class culture flourished. But in subtle contrast to Gutman, who built his career ripping out liberal premises root and branch, many of the new labor historians, rather, elaborated upon and explored the nuances of Gutman's (and E.P. Thompson's) insights.

The history they produced developed similarly. Gutman had come of age as a historian in a time when any claim to working-class agency necessarily militated against an assumed backdrop of unfettered, unfailingly welcome capitalist development. His successors, by contrast, flowering contentedly in their own independent cultural milieu, turned inward to an at times romanticized world of working-class culture. They celebrated its independence without, in many cases, fully grappling with the larger powers in relationship with which that cultural world developed.

In a related shift, they turned aside

from the task of taking on the center of U.S. history—or better yet, of fully establishing that working-class and black history is the center. The anger, the crusading impulse, the "oomph" of Gutman's own energetic assaults dissipated.

**From Gutman's America to Reagan's:** At the heart of the "new" labor history lay a rejection of the "old" labor history, with its focus on trade unions and their leaders—so-called "institutional" labor history. For Gutman, that also meant a rejection of the confines of the '50s Communist Party.

For members of the New Left generation, however, it meant something quite different. Their Gutmanesque concern with social structure, culture and community and their relative indifference to trade union structures supplied a historical subject that allowed for a loyal leftist commitment to the working class, but one that allowed many to turn away from the challenges of real American workers in the present.

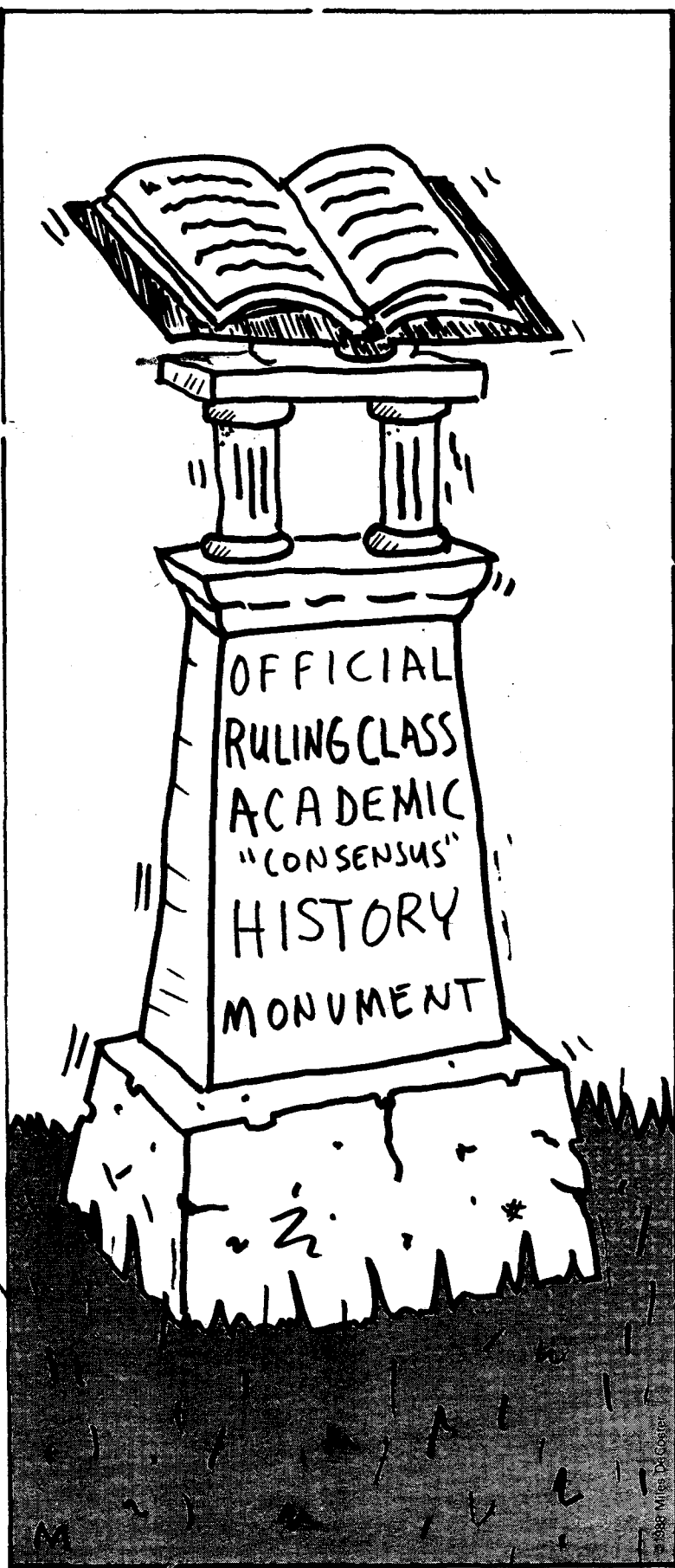
The Gutman school of labor history was always, at heart, about the 19th century. It didn't offer a model for working-class history in the 20th century and the very thorny questions that come with it. Why are modern workers indeed so conservative? How did the independent, flourishing cultural world of late 19th-century workers interact with mass culture in the modern U.S.? How do we make the leap, in other words, from Gutman's America to Reagan's?

Equally important, the Gutman-inspired school of labor history leaves us inadequately prepared to explain the labor movement today. What about all those entrenched conservative leaders? What about bureaucracy? What, indeed, about the most important legacy of U.S. labor history, not the Knights of Labor or the I.W.W. or the C.I.O., but the A.F. of L.?

Happily, Gutman's sustained popularity stemmed from his ability to speak to a second generation of labor historians as well, to those who came of age politically not in the '60s but in the '70s. For that cohort, Gutman's focus on issues of family and community, his careful attention to race and ethnicity and his earlier work's interest in the role of small businesses in workers' struggles all opened up a "labor history" far broader than the heroic deeds of idealized white male workers.

What we need now is to move on: to combine the insights of a feminist, anti-racist, "community" perspective with a hard look at the nature and more immediate origins of the labor movement today. Then, perhaps, we can better bridge the gap between the culture of labor history and the culture of the U.S. labor movement—and, hopefully, slay a few capitalist historical myths in the process.

Dana Frank teaches history at the University of Missouri, St. Louis.





**Society Against the State**  
By Pierre Clastres  
Zone Books MIT press, 218 pp.,  
\$18.95

By Richard Ryan

# Stolid states: economic violence isn't really the law of the jungle

**F**OR SOME YEARS NOW, MAINSTREAM academics have squandered their collective energies trying to convert the humanities into "social sciences," technical disciplines based on empirical evidence and subject to statistical or experimental proof. The result has been disastrous, and the disaster has at last become an issue for the left: Russell Jacoby in *The Last Intellectuals* has recently documented the corrosive effects of academic specialization on the American left, which is now utterly plagued by jargon and numbers.

Examples of humane and progressive scholarship are increasingly hard to find. It is therefore a pleasure to discover, albeit beyond our shores, this collection of provocative essays by the late anthropologist Pierre Clastres, who until his death in 1979 taught at the Ecole Pratique de Hautes Etudes in Paris. *Society Against the State* serves as a brilliant example of imaginative scholarship converting academic questions into grand explorations of human nature. On a more immediate level, it is a remarkable contribution to political anthropology, the search for basic or universal political structures among other societies.

**Cultures without a state:** In Clastres' case, other societies meant the tribes of the South American rain forests among whom he lived for many years, fascinated by their allegedly "archaic" character. (Much of this book records an ongoing confrontation with notions of the "archaic" and the "primitive," labels that we can now recognize as ideological signposts.) In studies of native South American cultures, a division has characteristically been made between the "high" civilization of the Incas and the "primitive" cultures of Brazil and Paraguay. The distinction rests, according to Clastres, on the assumption that the forest tribes are cultures without a state, without any developed practice of political power. To lack a state, by conservative analysis, is to lack a legitimate society.

It is this thesis—that "society is inconceivable without the state; the state is the destiny of every society"—that Clastres attacks. He argues instead that political power and sophisticated social structures are as real in primitive cultures as among developed societies, but that primitive cultures have managed to preclude the false necessity of the state by dispersing power as widely as possible among the members of the tribe. His essays explore, with great sympathy and insight, the various strategies forest people use to short-circuit the machinery of domination.

In *Society Against the State*, the social sciences resume their proper role as cultural critique, the informed "reading" of social signs. In-

terpretation (as opposed to data retrieval) remains the key to culture, and Clastres succeeds by decoding tribal institutions and revealing them in their full political sophistication.

**Question authority:** For instance, the will-not-to-power, the Indian rejection of the state, finds its highest expression in the duties of rain forest chieftans. Clastres demonstrates that this chieftanship is a species of inverted authority, a symbolic office bound up in gratuitous

## ANTHROPOLOGY

responsibilities. The chief has none of the traditional prerogatives associated with political power: he does not give orders, he does not appropriate goods (frequently he is required to distribute his own personal wealth to maintain power), he cannot compel obedience.

Instead, he is obliged to maintain an ongoing dialogue with his subjects, retelling the tribal legends, invoking the formidable precedent of racial ancestors. And while he alone may speak in these capacities, the tribe makes a great show of not listening to him. His role, outside of the carefully structured entertainments of war, is emphatically ridiculous, as it must be to symbolize the absurdity of power.

Nor does Clastres simply reinterpret the forest culture; he continually turns the quantitative method of traditional scholarship against itself, showing how previous anthropologists have managed to misinterpret the existing orders of the forest while laboring under the influence of dubious ethnocentric principles. In a section on Indian demography, for instance, the author argues convincingly that the pre-Columbian population of Paraguay's Guarani nomads ran as high as 1.5 million people, a figure six times greater than previous calculations. He goes on to project a total population, in 1492, of 100 million Amerindians, which he notes will give some real notion of the disaster of the European conquest. Clastres asserts that previous observers deliberately underestimated the American Indian population to disguise the fact that such a huge population could successfully maintain itself without the supervision of the state and a labor-intensive economy to support it.

**Inspired speculation:** It is possible, as Clastres submits, that primitive societies place such a premium on leisure because they see the pursuit of pleasure as the logical alternative to the exercise of power. For precisely this reason, the author speculates, the South American tribes have developed manifold ways of preventing regulated governments from arising in their midst.

In their humor, their ritual tattoos, their marriage customs, Clastres sees the traces of a systematic philosophy of undermining what political economist Max Weber regarded as the "monopoly of the legitimate use of violence," i.e., the state. Clastres even explores the ghostly metaphysics of the Guarani religion, a mystical and apocalyptic creed that preaches against the One, the principle of corruption and decay that binds all things. For "the One" Clastres reads "the universal essence of the state."

I found this entire line of synthesis and revision inspired, but also felt that Clastres was at times romanticizing primitive culture and reinterpreting it in the light of his own cultural prejudices, an inevitable danger for even the best anthropologist. For instance, his description of the shamans of the Guarani, who led their tribes wandering through the jungle in search of the Land Without Evil, echoes with the strains of a melancholy Gaulic Catholicism. The Guarani are translated, by dint of the author's eloquence, into believers yearning after redemptive grace. A lovely image, but improbable.

There are, unfortunately, issues more troubling than Clastres' attempt to turn Guarani priests into equatorial versions of Pascal. While he works to find the most noble elements of our own intellectual history

**Anthropologist Pierre Clastres argues in *Society Against the State* that "primitive" rain-forest cultures have managed to preclude the false necessity of the state by dispersing power as widely as possible among members of the tribe.**

already embedded in primitive culture, he simultaneously ignores tribal iniquities that mirror, or even exceed, the worst aspects of advanced societies.

**Varieties of injustice:** Thus even as Clastres shows that South American adult males maintained egalitarian and communal relations, he fails to account for other forms of oppression that pollute these societies. Slavery, chronic warfare, homophobia all are mentioned throughout the book; and

while not suppressing evidence of their existence, Clastres apparently found no reason to explain how his utopian anarchies allowed for such noxious varieties of injustice. For instance, he avoids the entire question of sexism, although he also gives every indication that the role of women in tribal culture was one of abject subjugation.

Given these contradictions, it seems that the only factor that favorably distinguishes the South American tribes from societies with advanced state apparatus is the absence, in the jungle, of systematic "economic violence." Because their economies function as small-scale collectives, it would appear that the

tribes are genuinely free of class conflict.

By averting the fall into materialism and class schisms, the Indians of South America have left themselves open to the creative possibilities of a life free from coerced labor: the anti-work ethic and the anti-power ethic go hand in hand. In the tribes mentioned by Clastres, adults rarely spend more than four or five hours of the day at work; the old derogatory label "subsistence economy" is, in the author's analysis, a smokescreen generated by anthropologists' puritan distaste for cultures dedicated to enjoyment and opposed to the accumulation of goods. Political theorists who favor a four-day work week, and who prefer to judge societies by quality-of-living criteria rather than rates of productivity or GNP, will take comfort in Clastres' analysis. ■

Richard Ryan is a regular contributor to *In These Times*.





# Sanctions

Continued from page 13

sterdam-based Shipping Research Group. To conceal the destination, oil brokers routinely forge documents, tranship fuel through third countries and divert tankers from their stated designation, according to the organization. The purpose is apparently not so much to fool oil-exporting nations, which generally know where their oil goes, as to protect them from the embarrassment of being caught openly ignoring the embargo.

**3. Finishing products in third countries** is a convenient method—sometimes legal, often not—to conceal their origin.

South Africa's Metkor Investments Ltd. set up a factory in Swaziland's Matsapha industrial park to put Swazi handles on steel pots made in South Africa. The goal: ship them to Europe under the Lome Convention, which allows duty-free imports from Swaziland and other black-led African nations, but not South Africa. Swazi officials refused to certify the pots as locally produced because they had too little content. "It's unfair," the factory manager told *In These Times*, because "if you look at the companies here, you know bloody well that 80 percent are doing the same."

South Africa's biggest textile firm, the Frame Group, made an even more blatant move, opening a Swaziland factory to wind large balls of South African yarn onto small skeins for packaging as a Swazi product and re-export, Swazi government sources said.

**4. Sending exports through third and even fourth countries** can obscure their origin, especially if combined with partial processing along the way. South African firms export cloth to Mauritius as a Malawian product, according to Amadee Darga, a leader of Militant Movement of Mauritius, the island nation's socialist opposition party. Mauritian factories then use the cloth to make garments for export duty-free to France and Germany. This violates the Lome Convention, which says garments may enter Europe duty-free only if made with cloth from a Lome signatory nation.

**5. Combining South African goods with those from other countries** is a time-honored tradition for South Africa's largest business organization, the giant De Beers-Anglo American group. De Beers' Central Selling Organization controls 80 percent of the world's diamond trade. At its bi-monthly London diamond auctions De Beers gives no clues about the origin of the stones it sells. The company

mixes gems from South Africa or illegally occupied Namibia with those produced in Botswana—site of the world's richest diamond mines—and other independent African nations. Also mingled with them are diamonds from Australia, a leading sanctions advocate, the Soviet Union and most other major producers.

Coal brokers mix South African and Chinese coal in giant bins at the Dutch port of Rotterdam and reship it as a product of Holland, though the country hasn't mined coal for 20 years.

**6. Moving the factory.** Sometimes it's not clear where disinvestment ends and evasion of anti-apartheid pressure begins. Coca-Cola made one of the cleverest moves to exploit such ambiguities in 1986, amid threats of a boycott by U.S. activists. The company "divested," selling its share in more than a dozen South African bottling plants. But it kept its South African earnings by moving the main profit center, a beverage concentrate factory, to Swaziland. Operating from the nation next door, Coke grosses at least \$50 million a year on sales to South Africa.

"Rearrangement of who owns the actual factories in South Africa...will not contribute to the economic isolation of apartheid," a coalition of the major U.S. anti-apartheid groups said in 1987, rejecting such moves as false disinvestment. But "it is disinvestment if you reduce your tax payments in South Africa, if you take jobs out of South Africa," responds a Washington-based consultant on African economic development who insists the Coke move was an anti-apartheid gain.

**7. Creating an American front.** Ciskei International Airways (CIA), created earlier this year in the nominally independent South African homeland, registered its planes in the U.S. instead of South Africa so that they would be free to fly anywhere in the world, General Manager Mike Potter admitted in an interview with the London-based newsletter "Southscan."

**Can sanctions work?** Though existing sanctions have been easy to evade, South African business leaders fear the bill now before Congress could cripple key sectors of the South African economy.

If the U.S. compels oil companies to abandon South African operations in order to retain U.S. oil and gas leases, as proposed in the sanctions bill, it will mean "the deathknell of oil capitalism in South Africa," an oil industry official told the Johannesburg *Weekly Mail*.

Similar action against foreign firms profiteering from U.S. investment could hurt South Africa even more. Adrian Botha, executive director of the American (South Africa) Chamber of Commerce, fears that the U.S. may "turn round to Toyota and BMW and say: 'You sell one more car [in South Africa] and you can forget about our market.'" Botha admitted the impact of such action would be devastating for South Africa because "we do not have a single trading partner who would not be directly affected."

But sanctions won't work without enforcement.

"Treasury, through the Office of Foreign Assets Control and the Customs Service, has carefully and thoroughly implemented" the CAAA, Deputy Assistant Treasury Secretary Robert A. Cornell claimed in congressional testimony on sanctions.

Yet a GAO report said in April that only one company, a firm caught exporting C-130 military aircraft manuals to South Africa through Argentina, has been convicted for violating CAAA.

The lack of strict enforcement is inexcusable, critics say, especially since the adminis-

tration has long had evidence of massive CAAA violations.

As early as last November, AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland brought Congress a detailed report on sanctions-busting. He used U.S. government trade figures to show that at least \$59 million worth of South African iron and steel, \$3 million worth of clothing and textiles and about \$70 million worth of other embargoed products had entered the U.S. illegally in the first half of 1987. Kirkland denounced the administration's "blatant failure" to enforce CAAA, and called for speedy prosecution of violators. As Kirkland told Congress, it's absurd to claim sanctions "don't work" when the administration has made no serious attempts to enforce them. □

Steve Askin is *In These Times'* Africa correspondent.

## 1968

Continued from page 24

produced it. But they had little control over the message, and polls after the convention suggested overwhelming public sympathy for the police. Some leftists, like Jerry Rubin, argued that people had to be beaten by the police to be "radicalized," the catchword of the times that caught the importance of people breaking out of the sterile, blinkered thinking of the postwar consensus. But this "radicalization" often substituted action and militancy for a clear sense of effective political strategy and coherent goals.

Getting people angry seemed a good alternative to complacency, yet it was doomed as a long-term way of winning majority support. After the convention, however, many leftists saw themselves not as mobilizing majorities but as smashing the state or increasing the cost of the war through disruption, substituting themselves for the majorities they might have won with a little more patience and a more inclusive strategy. The government, as its COINTELPRO project to sabotage the left showed, wanted the left to "pick up the gun" in order to destroy itself, longtime pacifist and convention protest organizer David Dellinger said at the commemorative discussions.

There were two competing visions at the time, Oglesby said. One was to struggle through the institutions of American society, to try to make democracy work and the ideals of the Bill of Rights and Constitution meaningful. The other was to see the country as Amerikkka, a corrupted empire, a police state that had to be exposed and then would collapse in a widening polarization of society. The latter increasingly won out.

It is easy to see why. The repeated attacks by the government on basic democratic rights and on the movement, using violence, sabotage and political trials, such as the Conspiracy Eight farce, provided grounds for outrage. But defective as American society was, it was not bankrupt and did not cut off all chance for effective action.

The inadvertent result of the '68 convention may have been the self-destruction of both liberalism and the new Left. Polling results from 1968 suggest Humphrey might have won if he'd disassociated himself from the Vietnam War more strongly and earlier. The convention only brought to a head deep conflicts that gave rise to an American political tragedy, a missed opportunity for a revised left-liberal coalition that would have been short of utopia yet still a force for progress. But the shards of both the old liberalism and the New Left remain within American culture, waiting for a time when a new majority synthesis can take shape from the fragments of the old. ■

## How to feed the hand that bites you

GABORONE, BOTSWANA—The South Africans come and murder us, and we still cross the border to give them our money the next day. These bitter words from a leading Botswana business figure summarize this country's contradictory relationship with its powerful neighbor and economic partner.

Since independence in 1966, South African commandos pulled into the dusty capital city, Gaborone, to hunt for guerrillas, then to hunt for guerrillas, then to hunt for guerrillas. In the most recent such raid, March 1987, *In These Times* April 13, they machine-gunned on sleeping people in a town near the border.

While killing its neighbors' citizens, South Africa also works to deepen its longstanding economic ties to many of the nine nations of the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADC), formed in 1980 to reduce economic dependence on Pretoria.

South Africa has invaded seven SADC members and all nine suffer from South African destabilization. But UNCTAD estimated in a report last year that the region's \$25 billion. Yet despite its minimize the impact of sanctions is forcing Pretoria to offer its victimized neighbors increasingly rich economic deals. In the past 18 months, the South African government and private sector pledged investments of \$3 billion in projects in SADC nations, estimates Eddie Cross, a Zimbabwean businessman involved in SADC efforts to disengage from South Africa.

The biggest is the Lesotho Highlands Water Project, costing \$2 billion over the next 10 years, a vast scheme in which Lesotho will sell water to South Africa and develop hydroelectricity to export use. The project is financed by South Africa, Lesotho and the World Bank. In 1985, Pretoria bought the 200,000-acre government-owned farm on which the project is located, and the project is now under way.

The project is a 10-year, \$2 billion deal, and the project is now under way.

deepening its already close connection to the company that dominates world diamond markets (see main story). The agreement ended any chance that Botswana, the leading producer of gem-quality diamonds, might market them independently of South Africa. Anti-sanctions forces use this link to lobby against diamond sanctions. A ban on South African diamonds will, they argue, hurt black-led Botswana.

Fear of U.S. sanctions also made Pretoria back soda ash production in Botswana. One of the few raw materials South Africa now gets from the U.S., soda ash is needed for glass-making, among other things. Botswana has long hoped to produce soda ash for export to South Africa but never tried because of competition from cheap U.S. exports. Last year, as sanctions pressure grew, Pretoria agreed to provide the needed tariff protection. Planners hope a \$400 million joint venture involving Anglo American and the Botswana government will begin production by 1991.

Such projects do serve SADC goals. Botswana Vice President and Finance Minister Peter Mmusi insists. "The soda ash connection is a resource in Botswana on which South Africa will depend," he said in an interview, partly reversing "the one-way dependence that at present exists." The diamond deal likewise advances Botswana's interests, he insisted, by giving it more power inside the company that controls its key export.

Yet these deals also reflect the fact that South Africa's neighbors are too small and dependent to completely sever their links with Pretoria, admitted Mmusi, who heads the SADC council of ministers.

Nonetheless, he and other SADC leaders have repeatedly emphasized the weakness of South Africa's neighbors should not be an excuse for avoidance of sanctions by others. If it were to help southern Africa, the deals should do more to put pressure on South Africa. Mmusi insists because the region's hopes for peace and peace depend on the destruction of apartheid. S.A.



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## LIFE IN HELL

### LIFE IN HELL

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MATT  
GREENING

### CHILDHOOD IS HELL

OR “I DO BELIEVE IN GHOSTS”

### CHAPTER 6

### HOW TO BE A

### THRILL-SEEKING 3-YEAR-OLD

### BEDTIME STALLING TACTICS

1. ASK FOR ANOTHER GLASS OF WATER.
2. PLEAD FOR ANOTHER HUG.
3. DEMAND ANOTHER TRIP TO THE POTTY.
4. SAY GOODNIGHT TO EVERY SINGLE OBJECT IN THE ROOM.

### ANNOYING STUFF

LINT ON YOUR PACIFIER

PUSHING ALL THE MAGNETIC LETTERS UNDER THE FRIDGE AND NOT BEING ABLE TO GET THEM OUT

BEING FORCED TO GO TO BED WHEN YOU'RE NOT TIRED AND THE REST OF THE FAMILY IS STILL UP HAVING A BLAST

### THINGS NOT GOING YOUR WAY? JUST SAY....

**NOOOOOOOOO!**

MILDLY DISGRUNTLED 3-YEAR-OLD

### GET A BIG REACTION WITH THESE FUN ACTIVITIES

I'D LIKE YOU ALL TO MEET ITCHY.

SHOW OFF YOUR NEW IMAGINARY PAL!

VOILA!!

CREATE A MASTERPIECE ON THE WALL!

DRINK OUT OF THE DOG'S WATER DISH!

I'M THIRSTY, RUFF.

### THE LAUGH-FILLED WORLD OF BRILLIANT HUMOR

THE PHYSICAL SWITCHEROO

I GOT SHOES ON MY HANDS!

THE CONCEPTUAL SWITCHEROO

KNOW WHAT I HAD FOR LUNCH?

BLOCKS!!

SLAPSTICK

HA HA!!

THE HUMOR OF NAUGHTINESS

JUICE GONE

### A HANDY DANDY BEHAVIOR CYCLE

HEY!

LOOK AT ME!

GIVE IT.

I NEED IT!

I WANT IT!

NOW!

IT'S MINE!

GET OUTTA MY WAY!

WHEEEE!

OOPS.

YOUR FAULT.

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By David Moberg

CHICAGO

**T**HE WHOLE WORLD WAS WATCHING "20 years ago as Chicago police waded into crowds of thousands of antiwar protesters, clubbing, macing, teargassing and arresting with brute force, as an unresponsive Democratic Party a few miles away sent Hubert Humphrey on his way to defeat at the hands of Richard Nixon.

But what did they see?

Two decades later the implications of that explosive week can still be felt for good and ill in American politics and culture. From a distance it looks like a tragedy, a conflict that rationally could have been avoided but somehow had to take place.

It would have been a great defeat for the antiwar movement and for the right to dissent in the U.S. not to have had a presence at the Democratic convention. It was essential to protest a war that President Lyndon Johnson had wound up, not down as he had promised. It was also necessary to give voice to the strong antiwar sentiments from the primaries that were virtually suffocated with the assassination of Robert Kennedy and muffled in the convention itself. Few who took part—and I was among them—regret being there.

**Mixed legacy:** But many people now regret what came out of it. As former Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) President Carl Oglesby noted in a recent weekend of reassessments by many Chicago '68 protesters, at the beginning of 1968 the antiwar movement was winning in the battle for public support. But by the end of the year the movement was on the defensive. Broad public opposition to the war grew, yet ironically public sympathy for the antiwar protesters did not. And in a further twist of history, the convention protests probably did spur many thousands of people, especially students and young people, to become more politically active. It was a mix of success and failure.

The convention brought to a head a "collision of forces" long in the making, argued former SDS leader Todd Gitlin, author of *The Sixties*. The New Deal liberal coalition, already under strain, cracked farther apart and has never come back together. The fragile links between liberals and the left had already been deeply strained by events such as the liberal establishment refusal to seat the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party delegation at the 1964 Democratic convention and the divisive Gulf of Tonkin resolution that gave Johnson wide war-fighting powers in Vietnam. But the '68 convention snapped the bonds, Gitlin said. The fault lay mainly with the obstinacy of Johnson, Humphrey and Chicago Mayor Richard Daley, and the forces they represented, but the damage was spread all around.

Much of the New Left rushed off on a chimerical pursuit of militancy and shrill, rhetorical "revolution" that not only ignored

# ANARCHY in the U.S.

The 20th  
anniversary  
of the 1968  
Democratic  
convention  
in Chicago  
prompts  
a wave of  
critical  
reappraisal

its creative roots in the early and mid-'60s but also made itself irrelevant to a public that was increasingly sympathetic to the movement's original message of participatory democracy, equal rights and a less imperial foreign policy. When continued non-violence, even in the face of officially sanctioned violence such as in Chicago, would have given the movement ongoing moral credibility with the vast majority, some New Leftists were tempted to prove they could be urban rioters or guerrillas like

their Third World heroes. The vast majority remained more cautious, closer to the democratic, non-violent roots of the New Left and more pragmatic politically. But the shrill posturing cast a pall over the whole movement.

**Suppression out of control:** The convention week convinced many that "the system doesn't work." After all, Daley had stonewalled and denied applications for permits to march and protest. And the attacks of the police on both the demonstrators and the press were not so much the result of offended cops "rioting" out of control as they were systematic attempts to suppress free speech and the press—as writer John Schultz, who wrote an eyewitness account, *No One Was Killed*, and former *Chicago Daily News* convention protest reporter Hank DeZutter maintained.

Given the image of the convention as a "violent confrontation" and its later effect on young leftists, it is important to recall how very little violence came from any of the protesters. There were a few left groups, including some from SDS, who wanted to fight with the police. But having just arrived in Chicago for the convention from the May '68 street demonstrations that rocked Paris, I was struck by how restrained the crowd was, even when attacked, and how few missiles were thrown at the police. In any case, much of the provocation and violence came from undercover police. (Military intelligence sources later estimated that one in six demonstrators was an undercover agent.) But there had also been inflated rhetoric that in part may have been Yippie theater to get press attention, but ultimately backfired.

Yippies wanted good theater, and they

*Continued on page 22*